Government of
Saskatchewan

Annual Report

Saskatchewan Social Services

2000-2001

Contents

Minister's Transmittal 2

Deputy Minister's Transmittal 3

Introduction 4

Organization 5
Legislation 6
Mandate 6
Strategic Plan 7

Program Divisions

Income Security 8
Community Living 25
Family and Youth Services 30

Regional Reports

Regional Map 45
Regional Operations 46
Northeast Region 48
Northwest Region 53
Southeast Region 57
Southwest Region 60
Saskatoon Region 63
Regina Region 66
Regional Caseload Activity 68

Support Services

Communications and Public Education 69
Research and Evaluation 71
Strategic Policy 73
Organizational Development 74
Community Development 76
Intergovernmental Relations 78
Technology and Property Management Services 79
Financial Management Services 82
    Expenditure Statement 2000-2001 84
    Revenue Statement 2000-2001 86
    Capital Assets 87

Office of Disability Issues 88

Index 91

Honourable Harry Van Mulligen,
Minister of Social Services

Minister's Transmittal

The Honourable Lynda Haverstock,
Lieutenant Governor,
Province of Saskatchewan

May it please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001.

Sincerely,

Harry Van Mulligen,
Minister of Social Services

Deputy Minister's Transmittal

Bonnie Durnford,
A Deputy Minister of
Social Services

The Honourable Harry Van Mulligen
Minister of Social Services

Dear Sir,

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the year ending March 31, 2001.

Respectfully submitted,

B. Durnford

Bonnie Durnford,
A Deputy Minister

Introduction

Social Services employed 3,046 people as of March 31, 2001. These include social workers, youth workers, facility staff and support staff. The annual budget is $575.3 million.

The services the Department provides help Saskatchewan's most vulnerable residents to participate more fully in the economic and social lives of their communities. These services are delivered in a variety of ways, but primarily through the regional offices of the Department. These regions have most of the Department's staff, and clients will come into contact most often with the regional staff. The Department offers services directly to the public through its 31 regional and 73 day offices across the province, and its 18 facilities. Some staff are co-located with other organizations and agencies to facilitate service integration. We also work with communities and community groups such as the John Howard Society which deliver services on our behalf.

The overall intent of all our services is to assist families and youth to build better lives. Our primary means of doing so are to:

- assist vulnerable families to care for and support themselves;
- provide basic income support to reduce poverty;
- protect children from abuse;
- support independent community-based care for the intellectually challenged;
- promote standards in day care; and
- work with youth who are in conflict with the law.

Saskatchewan Social Services touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals and families in the province. Some are assisted directly by our services, while others are involved indirectly through our community partners. As of March 31, 2001, 120,013 individuals were receiving some type of service or support from the Department. Of this total number, about 53 per cent (64,188) were in receipt of social assistance. This is the lowest the province's social assistance caseload has been since 1992.

One of the goals of the Department is to continue to assist employable individuals on assistance to move toward financial independence by helping them prepare for and find paid employment.

During the year, the nature of the caseload will vary dramatically. Many people come into contact with Social Services because of a specific incident which, when resolved, ends their involvement with the Department. Others are long-term clients, particularly those persons with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities, who may always need a degree of outside support to live their lives. Many clients have multiple needs, or require multiple services. This may be, for example, a family receiving income support which is also experiencing a crisis that results in a need for child protection.

For further information on Saskatchewan Social Services, please refer to its web site: ***www.gov.sk.ca/socserv***

All public reports, including previous annual reports and this annual report, are posted on the web site which supplement the annual report. Readers will also find legislation, policies, factsheets and frequently asked questions about our many programs and services.

If you have any questions or comments after reading this report, please refer to the webmaster (communications@ss.gov.sk.ca), or call 306-933-5970.

Organization

Minister
Harry Van Mulligen

A/Asst. Deputy Minister
Bob Wihlidal

A/Deputy Minister
Bonnie Durnford

A/Asst. Deputy Minister
Shelley Hoover

Regina Region
Regional Director - Dave Hedlund

Southeast Region
Regional Director - John Anderson

Southwest Region
Regional Director - Rhonda Cossette

Northwest Region
Regional Director - Ruth Seime

Northeast Region
Regional Director - Gail Hartsook

Saskatoon Region
Regional Director - Ron Pollock

Community Living
Executive Director - Larry Moffatt

- Therapy Support
- Family Support
- Community Based Service Delivery
- Early Childhood Intervention Services
- Direct Residential Services - Valley View Centre (Moose Jaw)

Financial Management
A/Executive Director - Darcy Smycniuk

Intergovernmental Relations
Executive Director - Don Fairbairn

Organizational Development Division
Executive Director - Heather Thurmeier

Technology and Property Management
Executive Director - Ron Naidu

Communications and Public Education
Director - Bill Carney

Office of Disability Issues
Director - Daryl Stubel

Strategic Policy
Director - Rick August

Family and Youth
Executive Director - Richard Hazel

- Child Protection
- Alternative Care for Children
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent Services
- Parenting Education
- Young Offender Services

Community Development
A/Director - Paul Wilkinson

Income Security
Executive Director - Phil Walsh

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Saskatchewan Income Plan
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement
- Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- Child Nutrition and Development Program
- Child Day Care
- Emergency Social Services

Research and Evaluation
Director - David Rosenbluth

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Legislation

The twelve provincial Acts administered by the Department are:

- *The Adoption Act*
- *The Child and Family Services Act*
- *The Child Care Act*
- *The Donation of Food Act, 1995*
- *The Department of Social Services Act*
- *The Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Implementation Act*
- *The Registered Social Workers Act*
- *The Rehabilitation Act*
- *The Residential Services Act* (dual authority with the Department of Health)
- *The Saskatchewan Assistance Act*
- *The Saskatchewan Income Plan Act*
- *The Young Offenders' Services Act*

The Department also administers many regulations under this legislation.

The Department administers portions of the federal *Young Offenders Act*.

Mandate

Social Services:

- **assists vulnerable families** to care for and support their members;
- **provides basic income support** for children, families and individuals, and works with others to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty;
- **protects children from abuse and neglect and assists people facing family violence** through prevention, education, and facilitating substitute or alternative care or shelter;
- **promotes a standard quality of child day care, and supports parents** in achieving a balance between family and other responsibilities;
- **promotes a balance of responsibility and meeting needs in youth**, and provides programs for those in conflict with the law;
- **supports independent, community-based care** for persons with mental and physical disabilities;
- **works across sectors within communities** to help them identify, own and respond to the social needs of their members; and
- **takes leadership** within and outside government to achieve this mandate.

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Strategic Plan

Saskatchewan is a good place to live, work and raise a family, but not all Saskatchewan people are able to take full advantage of the benefits of citizenship of the province. Some individuals, families and groups are disadvantaged relative to the average, or marginalized, to greater or lesser degrees, from the mainstream of Saskatchewan's economic and community life.

Citizenship and inclusion are important concepts to the Department of Social Services. The Department operates on the premise that the province as a whole will benefit if marginalized or disadvantaged persons have the same opportunities as other citizens to be included in the mainstream of Saskatchewan life, and to participate equitably in the economic, social and cultural life of the province, to the extent of their individual capacities.

One aspect of moving towards this vision is improving the social and economic circumstances of marginalized and disadvantaged people. Effective income security programs will have a role if they address both immediate needs and structural barriers, and help people without forcing them to surrender their independence and self-reliance.

For most marginalized and disadvantaged people, the best chance for a better life is through employment. Demographic trends in the Saskatchewan labour force hold out hope that disadvantaged people will have better access to economic opportunities, and that the economy will welcome their participation. One role Social Services plays is to help people to be ready to take advantage of these opportunities as they arise.

Growing up in healthy families is a precondition for children and youth to succeed as adult members of the community. The Department is strengthening its supports to families, and, where possible, maintaining family linkages in times of difficulty, for the longer-term good of the child. For youth experiencing difficulties, Department programs encourage responsible behaviour and maintain ties to family and community. Communities and government have to work in partnership to achieve these goals.

The Department continues to have responsibilities for responding to crises in peoples' lives, whether they be economic crises, difficulties in family functioning, or youth behaviour problems. However, the Department is placing more emphasis on the basic issues in peoples' lives which lead to contact with programs like social assistance, child welfare or young offenders' services.

The Department also is paying more attention to the structural issues facing population groups who are disproportionately marginalized or disadvantaged, such as Aboriginal people, single parent families, and people with disabilities. Structural program reform efforts to date in the area of child benefits and family income security are already paying off in the form of reduced poverty and dependency.

Of course, not all of the solutions to social problems lie in Social Services programs. The Department continues to have a role in advocating for policies and programs at the national and provincial level which support citizenship and inclusion for our clients. We also encourage employers, the labour market and communities to support, to the fullest extent possible, the participation and inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged people, with the goal of a more prosperous and cohesive society.

*Our **vision** for the future is that all Saskatchewan people who are presently disadvantaged in the economy or in their community have the same opportunities as other citizens to participate equitably in the economic, social and cultural life of the province.*

*The basic **goals** identified in the Social Services strategic plan are:*

- *improved social and economic circumstances for people who are disadvantaged;*
- *communities include and support all their members as equal citizens;*
- *policies, programs, services and systems support the Department's strategic directions.*

Program Divisions

Services to the public are provided through three major program divisions:

- Income Security
- Community Living
- Family and Youth

Income Security Division

Programs and Services

In support of the policy directions of the Department's Strategic Plan, an organizational change took place effective February 1, 2001, as Child Day Care Branch became part of Income Security Division. In 2000-2001, the Division offered the following programs, which will be described more fully in later sections:

- Saskatchewan Child Benefit Child Benefit Adjustment
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement
- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Saskatchewan Income Plan (Seniors' Benefits)
- Community-based Income Security Programs
- Emergency Social Services
- Child Day Care

Objectives of the Division

The objectives of the Income Security Division are to:

- provide basic income support for children, families and individuals to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty;
- provide services and supports to enhance independence through employment and other measures;
- support communities to develop services which contribute to the social and economic well-being of low-income children, families and individuals.

Budget, Staffing and Delivery

The total expenditure for Income Security programs in 2000-2001 was $333,924,596. Of this amount, 98 per cent was provided in the form of payments or benefits to low-income families and individuals or third party service providers. The total expenditure for Child Day Care Programs in 2000-2001 was $18,010,361. Combined, the total Divisional expenditure was $351,934,957 for 2000-2001.

***Table 1** - A breakdown of the expenditures, staffing and delivery is provided below:*

Income Support Program	**2000-01 Actuals ($000s)**	**Staffing**	**Delivery**
Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	255,038	263	Regional
Saskatchewan Child Benefit/CB Adjustment	46,804	26	Central
Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	11,541		Central
Saskatchewan Income Plan (Senior's Benefits)	10,924	3	Central
Community Based Income Security Programs	1,968	45	Regional/ Central
Income Security Administration*	7,650		
Income Support Totals	**333,925**	**337**	
Child Day Care Programs	**2000-01 Actuals ($000s)**	**Staffing**	**Delivery**
Parent subsidies	9,850	15	Central
Facility Grants	6,482		
Child Day Care Administration	1,678	20	Regional/ Central
Child Day Care Totals	18,010	35	
Total Expenditures	**351,935**	**372**	

* *Includes expenditures for computer processing costs. Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement system costs, and communications costs. System expenditures are managed by the Technology and Property Management Division and communications expenditures are managed by the Communications and Public Education Branch. Also includes staffing and expenditure for Benefit Administration and Audit Services.*

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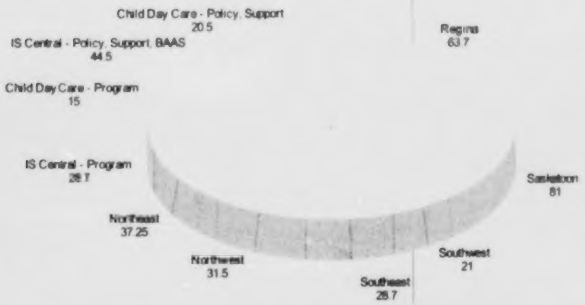
Income Security has 372 staff in regional and central offices, including Child Day Care staff. Approximately 83 per cent of these positions provide direct service and support to clients.

Regional staff provide front-line delivery of the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) as well as client and community services. Regional management is responsible for activities in their region and report on their operations centrally.

Central management and staff monitor accountability; provide policy, program and technical support; and provide centralized delivery of the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, the Child Benefit Adjustment, the Saskatchewan Income Plan, and the Child Day Care Subsidy. Central staff are also responsible for policy direction, administration and program co-ordination for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, which is administered on behalf of the province by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

Number of Income Security Division Regional and Central Staff - 2000-01



Building Independence — Income Security Redesign

The strategic directions for Income Security Redesign are intended to achieve an integration of social and economic policy principles and to promote the citizenship principle in policies and programs. Citizenship means each individual has the right to a reasonable opportunity to be part of economic and community life. Each citizen also has the obligation to contribute to the fullest extent of their capacities.

A key focus of Income Security Redesign has been to reduce the welfare wall by providing supports outside the welfare system, thereby broadening access to benefits for all low-income people including those on social assistance and the working poor. This approach returns the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) to its role of providing basic income support for those in transition to employment and those unable to support themselves. Work with individuals is oriented towards preparation for and linkages to jobs. In this way, all Saskatchewan people may enjoy prosperity, opportunity, security, and an improved quality of life as a result of full participation in a growing provincial economy.

The first stage of Income Security Redesign saw the introduction of new benefit programs, profiled as part of the Building Independence strategy, to assist low-income families in the care of their children and to encourage and support their decisions to work. Introduced in 1997, the Provincial Training Allowance, administered by Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, provides support to learners attending adult basic education and related programs, to prepare them for participation in the labour market. In 1998, three new programs representing Saskatchewan's commitment to the National Child Benefit initiative were launched: the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Family Health Benefits. With the introduction of these programs and an improved provincial economy, the number of single-parent families receiving assistance dropped by nine per cent and the number of two-parent families receiving assistance dropped by 23 per cent from 1998 to 2001. Also of note, the length of time on assistance for families with children declined by over 25 per cent over the same period.

The second stage of Redesign was launched by the Minister on December 13, 2000 in an address to the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers in Saskatoon. This marked the beginning of focused consultations with the public and key stakeholder groups. Since that time, senior Department officials have consulted extensively with groups throughout the province. Response is supportive of the approach taken in Redesign and for building supports outside of social assistance to address adequacy of income and promote participation in the labour market.

Planning for Income Security Redesign has been supported by extensive research in a number of areas. Working with other departments, future redesign efforts will focus on the affordability and quality of housing, opportunities available for people with disabilities, issues of work and child care, and the need for enhanced training and employment supports. Service delivery renewal will simplify program administration and refocus staff resources to activities which overcome client barriers to employment, education, training and community participation.

The Department continues to work with Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training toward the common objective of increasing the participation of low-income people in the labour force. Jobs First pilots, matching low-income people directly to jobs, are to commence May 3, 2001, in Yorkton and Regina. These pilot projects will also include the telephone Call Centre access as the first point of service, First Step orientations to social assistance, and Transition Planning services to assist clients with planning for independence.

As a first step to more streamlined services, the Benefit Administration and Audit Services (BAAS) unit was implemented in October 2000. BAAS is a specialized unit located in Saskatoon, from which services are delivered on a provincial basis to social assistance clients requiring a top-up to the Provincial Training Allowance, clients who farm or operate small businesses, and long term clients who live in special care facilities. BAAS also provides services related to delivery of social assistance benefits through northern Bands; matching of benefits with other provinces, some federal government departments; and other provincial departments; and random audits which were previously the responsibility of regional offices.

Saskatchewan Child Benefit

Introduced July 1, 1998, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit (SCB) provides a monthly allowance to assist lower-income families with the cost of raising children. SCB-eligible families who do not have other supplementary health coverage are entitled to receive Family Health Benefits (FHB), administered by Saskatchewan Health. By assisting families to meet the needs of their children, these programs enable low-income working parents to remain in the workforce, and reduce the barriers for parents moving from social assistance to work.

The SCB is administered on behalf of the province by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and benefits are combined in a single monthly payment with the Canada Child Tax Benefit and the National Child Benefit Supplement.

Under the National Child Benefit initiative, the federal government agreed to assume responsibility for children's basic needs by providing new funds on a phased-in basis over several years. When this initiative was introduced, the Saskatchewan government provided additional money up front through the SCB so families would be eligible to receive their full benefit immediately. The SCB is designed to phase out as the federal program matures through staged increases.

SCB Caseload Profile and Trends

As of March 31, 2001, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit was being paid to approximately 33,100 Saskatchewan families with 67,800 children. Approximately 66 per cent were single parents, and 34 per cent were two-parent families. The average SCB payment per family was $111 per month. The number of families receiving the SCB and the average cost per family are decreasing each year as the federal investment increases over time.

The federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs provides a child benefit to approximately 8,800 families with 20,100 children living on-reserve.

In conjunction with the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS), the SCB extends children's benefits to all low-income families, whether or not they are on social assistance. For families on social assistance, this means that children's basic benefits are now delivered by the combined NCBS/SCB. For a small and declining number of cases, the Department provides a Child Benefit Adjustment to ensure no family on social assistance receives lower benefits as a result of the transition to NCBS/SCB. In 2000-2001, an average of 1,584 families received adjustments in the amount of $153 per month.

Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES), also introduced July 1, 1998, provides a monthly supplement to wages, child and/or spousal maintenance payments, and self-employment earnings of lower-income parents. The program assists parents with the child-related costs of going to work and supports their decision to work.

SES is administered from a central Call Centre located in Regina, using innovative technology to deliver the program in an efficient, cost-effective, and family-friendly manner. For convenience, the call centre features extended hours of operation and is open on weekends. During this fiscal year, over 98,000 calls were fielded by call centre staff. People may also prefer to report their changes through an automated telephone service. Program enhancements to SES are planned for the coming year which will improve benefits for many families.

SES Caseload Profile and Trends

During 2000-2001, an average of 6,480 families received monthly SES benefits. This is an increase of 640 families per month, an 11 per cent increase, from last fiscal year. Approximately 70 per cent of families receiving SES benefits were single parents and 30 per cent were two-parent families. The Department undertook a public awareness campaign which began in April 2000, consisting primarily of direct mail to potential clients and mass mail to partners such as schools and day cares. The average monthly SES payment per family was $148.

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) provides financial assistance to people who lack sufficient resources to meet their basic needs. SAP benefits are commonly referred to as social assistance or welfare. SAP provides a safety net for individuals and families whose needs cannot be met through income from employment or other means, including other federal and provincial income security programs.

Social Services' staff work with clients to establish a transition plan to independence. Clients who are unable to find employment are referred to the nearest Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services office for assistance in accessing training and employment opportunities.

SAP Caseload Profile and Trends

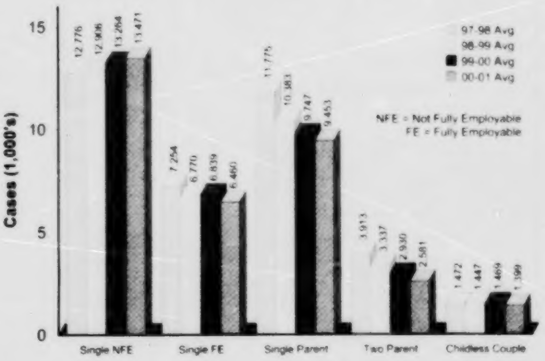
The social assistance caseload has been declining for the past six years. This downward trend is generally due to an improved provincial economy and the Building Independence programs.

In 2000-2001, an average of 33,363 cases (individuals and families) received benefits under SAP. This represents a decrease of 886 cases from 1999-2000 (a 2.5 per cent decrease) and a decrease of 6,861 cases from the 1994-1995 average (a 17 per cent decrease).

Over the last six years, social assistance redesign, improved training, skill development opportunities and improved economic growth have reduced by 20,100, or 24 per cent, the numbers of persons in SAP cases, of which 10,600 were children.

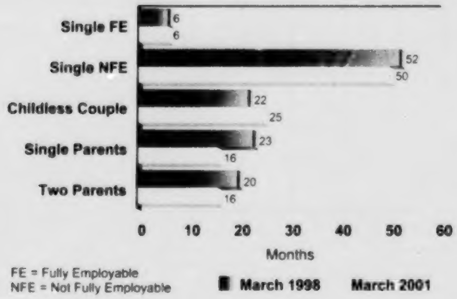
In 2000-2001, family cases with children declined by 644 or five per cent from the previous fiscal year. The drop in family cases continues the trend of the previous year, and is strongly correlated with the 1998 introduction of the SCB, SES and FHB programs, which make employment a better option than social assistance for families with children. From 1998 to 2001, the number of single parents relying on social assistance decreased by nine per cent and the number of two parent families by 23 per cent.

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Cases by Family Type

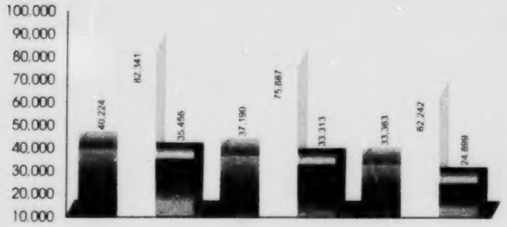


As well, the new programs and the availability of employment opportunities have decreased the length of stay on assistance for families with children by 25 per cent since 1998.

Median Length of Time on Assistance

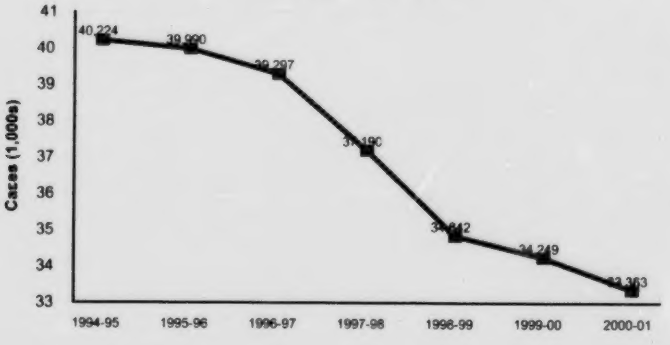


Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Trends



	94-95	97-98	00-01
■ Cases	40,224	37,190	33,363
Persons	82,341	75,887	62,242
■ Children	35,456	33,313	24,899

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Average Caseload

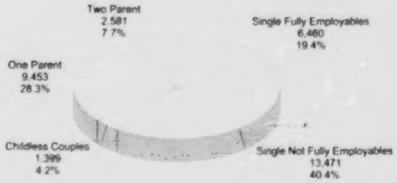


Single persons and single-parent families are the two largest segments of the SAP caseload and make up almost 90 per cent of the caseload.

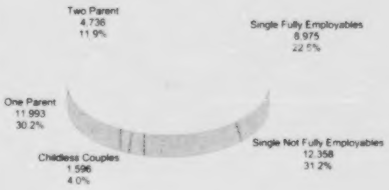
About 56 per cent of all SAP case heads are not fully employable, which means they are unable or only partially able to work, in training, or employed in a sheltered workshop.

In 2000-2001, approximately 40 per cent of the caseload were single not fully employable cases. By comparison, in 1994-1995, this segment of clients made up approximately 31 per cent of the caseload, emphasizing the need to improve supports for these individuals. All other case types, including single fully employable individuals, childless couples and parents with children declined over the same period of time.

Average Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Caseload Composition - 2000-01

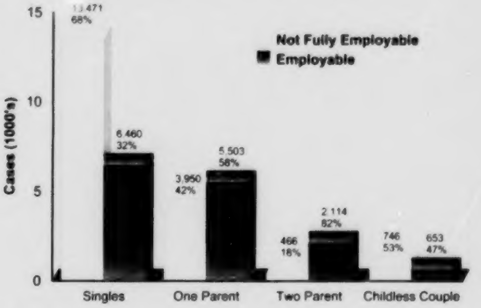


Average Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Caseload Composition - 1994-95

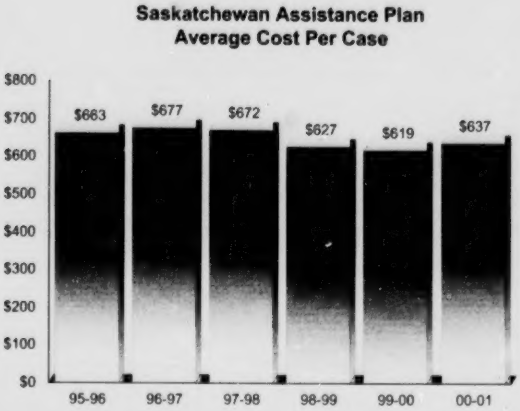


Among single-person cases, 68 per cent were considered not fully employable. Single people who are employable typically remain on SAP for an average of six months.

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Employability Status - 2000-01



The average monthly cost per SAP case in 2000-2001 was $637. This represents a 2.9 per cent increase from the previous year, primarily due to inflationary pressures on items such as utilities, rent and special needs.



Environmental Factors Affecting SAP

Success in obtaining jobs for social assistance recipients is influenced strongly by unemployment levels in the economy. In general, an increase in the number of unemployed in Saskatchewan will result in an increase in the SAP caseload. Unemployment in Saskatchewan remained low in 2000, and most economic forecasters predict little change in the rate for 2001.

The Canadian economy experienced periods of recession in the late 1970's, mid-1980's, and early 1990's. Periods of recession, with accompanying high unemployment levels, are typically followed by significant increases in the social assistance caseload. While caseloads decline during the post-recession recoveries, they do not usually return to their pre-recession levels.

Regardless of economic cycles, there are segments of the population that tend to have higher unemployment levels than the average population. These include single parents, youth (ages 18-29), Aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities.

Education level is a key factor which may affect both an individual's ability to find employment and his or her expected income. About 70 per cent of SAP cases are headed by persons with less than grade 12. In contrast, among Saskatchewan's total labour force, 23 per cent have less than grade 12. (*Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, 1998.*) From 1990 to 1998, employment for those with less than high school graduation in Saskatchewan decreased from 55 per cent to 47 per cent (*Saskatchewan Labour Market Trends Report, January 2000*).

The presence of children has also tended to influence the ease with which families can move from social assistance to employment. The cost of child care and the potential loss of health benefits for children have been two barriers to independence. Families with children have tended to stay longer on social assistance than single persons or childless couples. The Building Independence programs were specifically designed to help reduce these barriers which have discouraged people on assistance from moving into the workforce.

SAP Delivery Through Northern Bands

Social Services has agreements with five northern First Nations (Peter Ballantyne, La Ronge, Montreal Lake, Black Lake, and Hatchet Lake) for the delivery of social assistance to off-reserve Band members in adjacent communities.

Income Security Division conducts audits of cases administered by the Bands to ensure assistance is provided in accordance with SAP regulations and policies. In addition, the Division delivers ongoing support and training to Band staff on SAP program policies and regulations.

In 2000-2001, the average monthly caseload for the Northern Bands was 404, down from 489 in 1999-2000 due to new Treaty Land Entitlement developments. Total annual expenditure was $3.2 million.

These arrangements with northern Bands advance the partnership approach of service delivery between First Nations and the Province.

Saskatchewan Income Plan

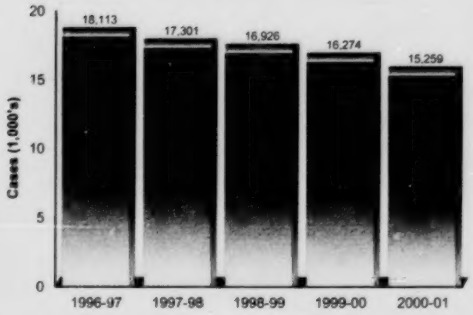
The Saskatchewan Income Plan (SIP) provides supplementary income for senior citizens who have little or no income other than the federal Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). Eligibility for SIP benefits is determined from the income reported on the seniors' GIS renewal form or income tax return. SIP benefits are combined with the federal OAS and GIS and issued in a consolidated monthly payment by the federal government on behalf of Social Services. This arrangement helps reduce administration costs.

In combination with the OAS and GIS, SIP benefits help to reduce the incidence and depth of low income among Saskatchewan seniors. Among Canadian provinces, Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of seniors but one of the lowest rates of poverty among the elderly.

In 2000-2001, an average of 15,259 low-income seniors received benefits each month. On average, SIP benefits added almost $663 to the annual income of these individuals.

The number of persons receiving benefits under the program has been declining steadily over time. This is the result of an increasing proportion of seniors receiving income from other sources including Canada Pension Plan or other pension benefits.

Saskatchewan Income Plan Average Caseload



Child Nutrition and Development Program

Under the Child Nutrition and Development Program (CNDP), government and communities work together to reduce the nutritional risks to children from low-income families. Community funding provided through the program is used for food, nutritional education, and family support projects.

In 2000-2001, funding of $1.2 million was provided to over 45 projects delivered by community-based organizations, local governments, schools and school divisions across the province. Community and school-based nutrition programs provide meals to children in need. These projects deliver over one million meals annually to children throughout the province. Family support initiatives such as community kitchens, community gardens, and other self-sufficiency projects help low-income families acquire skills and abilities necessary for independence. Through the CNDP, innovative community development programs such as food security initiatives have been established. These programs improve access to good food, encourage healthy eating habits and build community capacity to respond to the needs of low-income residents.

Service providers observe that children who receive proper nutrition and nutritional education have better school attendance, are more attentive in class, have improved social skills, and better relationships with peers, teachers and the community.

Other Income Security Community-Based Projects

The Division continues to explore effective ways of providing services to the people of Saskatchewan, including alternatives that enhance community involvement, ownership and delivery. Community-based programs are managed regionally and co-ordinated centrally.

Throughout the year, additional funding helped community organizations develop services and approaches which contributed to the social and economic well-being of low-income persons in Saskatchewan. In 2000-2001, funding was provided to the following organizations:

- the Unemployed Workers Help and Counselling Centre in Regina, to assist workers with alternative income claims such as Employment Insurance;
- Community Reference Panel pilots established in the fall 2000 in Beauval and Cumberland House to provide an opportunity for greater community input into services and programs in the North;
- the Salvation Army in Saskatoon, to provide after-hours emergency financial services for the Saskatoon Regional Income Security office;
- the Saskatoon Core Neighborhood Youth Co-op, to provide youth in the inner city with opportunities to engage in creative economic activities based on environmental principles; and,

- community-based organizations to provide budget counselling and skill development services for social assistance clients.

Emergency Social Services

Emergency Social Services (ESS) is available to meet the non-medical survival needs of persons affected by events such as forest fires when the capacity of municipal authorities is exceeded. Services include feeding, lodging, clothing, personal services and registration/inquiry. The Division was not asked to provide emergency support in 2000-2001, but continued its work with Saskatchewan Emergency Planning and other agencies on plans for emergency preparedness. In addition, the Division continued to sponsor an annual three day ESS course for Department staff, municipalities and community-based organizations.

Income Security Staff Development and Support

The Division provided 463 training opportunities which were available to Departmental staff and personnel from collateral and community-based agencies. Training was provided on topics such as social assistance policy and procedures, case management, communication and interviewing skills, understanding poverty, the dynamics of family violence and child abuse, the impact of fetal alcohol syndrome, cultural awareness, and other topics relevant to new and veteran program staff. Additional training was provided to audit and verification staff to ensure the continued integrity of essential program accountability functions.

ISD Program Accountability

Financial Controls

A variety of financial controls are employed within the Saskatchewan Assistance Program to ensure the eligibility of all clients and the accuracy of benefits. These controls include:

- an annual program audit. Each year a random sampling of cases is audited to monitor financial error trends. The 2000-2001 program audit for fiscal year 1999-2000 showed that the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan experienced an error rate of three per cent and continues to be below the acceptable error limit of four per cent established in consultation with the Provincial Auditor;
- an automated system which registers all clients on a common data base and prevents benefits from being issued to the same client from more than one office; and
- automated computer matching with other programs to verify circumstances and income. This includes matching with Human Resources Development Canada (which administers Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan), Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and the Workers' Compensation Board.

In October 1998, Saskatchewan entered into an agreement with all provinces (except Quebec) and territories to share information to ensure clients do not collect social assistance in more than one jurisdiction at the same time.

In addition to improving accuracy, the financial controls are designed to be non-intrusive. These efforts support the Department's overall strategy to deliver a high standard of service while maintaining accountability and public confidence.

Appeal Mechanisms

The Division has mechanisms in place which allow citizens to appeal decisions concerning either their eligibility or amount of assistance.

A recipient of social assistance may appeal a decision by submitting a request in writing to the Regional Director. The Regional Director will ask senior officials to review the case. If an adjustment does not result, a hearing of the Local Appeal Committee, made up of local interested citizens, will be held within 30 days from the date the appeal is made. If recipients or Regional Directors are not satisfied with the decision of the Local Appeal Committee, they may ask for an appeal before the provincial Social Services Appeal Board, whose members are also independent citizens. The decision of the Provincial Appeal Board is final. In this fiscal year, 397 appeals were heard by the Local Appeal Committee which upheld the Department in 372 cases. One hundred and seventeen appeals were heard by the Provincial Appeal Board which upheld the Department in 90 cases.

A separate appeal process exists for the income tested programs such as the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. A recipient may make a request for an appeal to the program manager. If the appellants are not satisfied, they may appeal to an adjudicator for review. A decision must be made within 20 days and is final. In 2000-2001, 79 appeals were registered. There were three appeals forwarded to the adjudicator. The Department was upheld in all cases.

Child Day Care Branch

Child Day Care supports Saskatchewan families by promoting quality early childhood care and education of children, particularly while parents go to work, pursue employment, or access education and training leading to employment. The Child Day Care Branch became a part of the Income Security Division on February 1, 2001, recognizing child care as an important element of the Building Independence strategy and linkage to independence for low-income people and communities.

The Child Day Care Program offers the following services:

- licenses child care centres (group child care services) and family child care homes (private individuals providing care in their home), and establishes a minimum standard of care in licensed child care facilities;
- monitors licensed child care facilities ensuring standards are maintained;
- investigates unlicensed or over-enrolled private child care operations, ensuring children are protected from risks associated with too many children and too few caregivers;
- supports parents and caregivers by providing funding and consultative supports to help licensed facilities offer quality programs and access to licensed care;
- provides research, information, education and consultative supports to individuals and community groups to assist them in identifying or developing child care services appropriate to their needs; and,
- co-ordinates service delivery and promotes integration of services for children and families.

Objectives of the Branch

The objectives of the Child Day Care Branch are to:

- promote the growth and development of children and to support the provision of child care services to Saskatchewan families;
- ensure low-income families have access to child care resources that provide a healthy, safe and nurturing environment for children; and,
- provide an increased and more flexible range of safe and nurturing child care options for low-income families to support labour market attachment.

Budget, Staffing and Delivery

The Child Care Program has a total of 35.5 staff positions in regional and central offices. Twelve staff perform the licensing, monitoring and consultative services in six regional offices and service centres. Two regional managers are responsible to administer and report on these activities in their regions, co-ordinating service delivery with government and other agencies. They work with central policy staff on program direction and development.

Another 16.5 staff, located in central office in Regina, administer the Child Care Subsidy Program and make payments to licensed child care facilities.

Five central managers and staff provide policy, program and technical support and financial management and accountability for the program. The Branch's expenditure was $18.01 million in 2000-2001.

Activities

Licensing, Monitoring, Inspection

The branch works to ensure Saskatchewan families have access to licensed child care services for the supplemental (non-parental) care of their children.

In 2000-2001, 12 child care consultants and two program managers directed the annual inspection, re-licensing and ongoing monitoring of approximately 450 child care facilities. These child care consultants also manage closures and license new day care facilities. Annually, consultants license about 45 new homes to replace the 13 to 15 per cent of licensed homes which close each year.

As of March 31, 2001, there were 135 licensed child day care centres operating in the province with a total of 4,951 child care spaces. An additional 299 family child care providers were licensed to operate some 2,215 spaces in their homes. These spaces provide licensed services for just over five per cent of children under 12 years of age with working mothers in the province.

Two of the branch's major initiatives are to increase the availability of licensed child care services for infants and to improve child care availability in rural communities.

Amendments to *The Child Care Act* took effect in September, 2000, offering more options for caregivers and families. New legislative provisions have the potential to assist rural and northern communities to develop more licensed child care services over time, as well as the ability to increase the availability of infant care. The amendments provide for group family child care homes for up to 12 children with two caregivers, and allow family child care in homes to be located in dwellings other than the caregiver's principal place of residence. Thirteen new group homes with 134 new spaces were developed during 2000-2001 which, when added to existing arrangements, meant that by March 31, 2001, there were 20 group family child care homes operating 221 licensed home spaces in the province. One hundred and twelve of these spaces were located in rural locations. These homes also have the potential to provide services for an estimated 40 more infants in the province.

The Branch continues to field concerns about unlicensed individuals caring for too many children in their homes. *The Child Care Act* limits the number of children in care to eight. The Branch investigates complaints to ensure compliance with the legislation. Enforcement in these situations requires sensitivity to the rights of parents to make their own child care decisions while preserving the integrity of the legislation.

During the 2000-2001 fiscal year, the Branch responded to 56 complaints of private caregivers with too many children. Upon investigation, 18 of the complaints were unsubstantiated. Of the remaining 38 complaints, 36 of the caregivers or 95 per cent have complied or are in the process of complying. Although a few caregivers closed their child care homes, the main method of compliance has been to reduce the number of children in care to eight. A small percentage pursued licensing as well.

Child Day Care proceeded to update legislative program requirements in response to many positive changes in practice that had been adopted over a number of years. The Branch undertook an extensive consultation process with various stakeholders to update regulations to reflect current standards and to authorize established program and funding changes.

Supporting Parents, Facilities and Caregivers

The Child Care Subsidy Program administers financial support for low-income families needing child care. During 2000-2001, the Child Care Subsidy Program funded licensed child care facilities on behalf of just over 3,400 children from about 2,700 low-income families. The monthly subsidy averaged $220 per child and helped some 2,400 single parents, primarily women, and 300 two-parent families, to participate in the workforce or receive training. These figures are consistent with those of the past several years.

The Child Care Subsidy Program continued to issue a 100 per cent child care fee subsidy for parents on social assistance whose children are professionally referred to a licensed child care service because of a diagnosed special need. During 2000-2001, the program provided full fees directly to the child care facilities on behalf of 213 children in 154 families for a total parent portion expenditure of $127,000.

The new Early Childhood Services Grant was successfully implemented in September, 2000 with each eligible centre receiving the equivalent of $570 per month per staff as required in regulations. Licensed infant spaces received $190 per month, licensed toddler spaces received $114 per month, preschool spaces $57, and school-age spaces $38 per month. As intended, the new grant formula reduced the administrative burden on centres and provided a more equitable and rational funding base to be managed by non-profit parent boards.

A second budget initiative was implemented in 2000-2001, whereby the annual Family Child Care Equipment Grant was increased from $50 per licensed space to $75 per licensed space. The criteria for use of this grant was expanded to include, in addition to replacing children's equipment and supplies, professional development activities and resources for the provider as well as the cost of developmentally appropriate children's activities - hence the new name Family Child Care Equipment and Programming Grant.

Advancing Inclusive Child Care

Following the 1999 review of the Child Day Care Special Needs program, the program took first steps in a new direction — moving from an individualized to a more inclusive approach to addressing special needs. The three priorities identified through the Special Needs Child Care Review include: awareness and training, children with exceptionally high needs and centre/community centred programs. As a result, a number of pilot projects and initiatives have been implemented in the three priority areas:

- ***Awareness and Training:***

  Preparing for Inclusion is a training program to support early childhood educators and communities to be responsive to the principles of inclusion.

  Partnerships for Inclusion is a quarterly newsletter that is provided to all licensed homes and centres, as well as referring professionals and interested parties in the community. It provides updated information on new directions in inclusive child care as well as resource information focused on a particular topic.

- ***Children with Exceptionally High Needs:***

  Enhanced Accessibility is a new program to remove the barriers that parents of children with exceptionally high needs face in participating in the work force. It provides funding that is reflective of the real costs involved in caring for children with high needs.

- ***Child Care Centre and Community Based Programs:***

  Community Solutions is a program that was initiated to address the issues which centres and communities identified during the review. The purpose is to allow programs the opportunity to design and deliver services specific to their own community needs. $150,000 in new funds were allocated to this program in the 2000-2001 budget. With these funds and previous rural and workplace initiative funds, the Branch funded several successful community projects. (*See Case Example - Integrated Early Childhood Services, page 24.*)

  Inclusion (Block) Funding is being piloted in four centres across the province. The purpose is to support centres in delivering services to all children, including those with special needs, without focusing on the deficits of particular children. This funding replaces the Child Development Grants; however, centres may still be eligible for Enhanced Accessibility Grants.

  Keeping the Door Open is a research project sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada. Four centres in Saskatchewan are involved in testing an on-site consultation model designed to improve centres' abilities to include all children in their programs. An additional benefit to this project is that it increases Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (Revised) scores, thereby improving quality, an issue that was highlighted in the *You Bet I Care!* national research report. The Branch is currently incorporating the program on a small scale with the intent of adopting the approach to improving service quality on a broader base in the future.

Provincial Early Childhood Development Strategy

Throughout 2000-2001, the Branch continued its involvement in the development of a strategic plan for early childhood development. The scope and timing of the plan received a significant boost with the federal government's announcement of a national commitment of $2.2 billion to Early Childhood Development over a five year period. Saskatchewan's share is approximately $73 million over five years. Interdepartmental work proceeded throughout the year to develop a program in response to the federal initiative.

Income Security Division Research Activities

To inform the social policy agenda and assist in future planning, the Division undertook extensive research in many areas.

The Department was interested in client perspectives with regard to the barriers to independence that they face. The Social Assistance Client Barriers Survey was led by Social Services' Research and Evaluation Branch in partnership with Income Security Division, and conducted by Prairie Research Associates. The survey format was established from a review of the literature as well as from focus groups held with staff and clients. The survey sample consisted of clients applying for social assistance in Regina and Yorkton between February and July 2000. This client input has contributed significantly to future directions for Income Security Programs.

A Disability Supports Reference Group, with representatives from across government and the disability community, was established by the department and the Office of Disability Issues (ODI) in the summer of 2000 to explore preliminary policy options on disability supports and attachment to the labour market. Complementing the work of the reference group, the Department and ODI are undertaking a research project over the next several months to determine how interventions for persons with disabilities can most effectively be delivered to promote and sustain attachment to the labour force.

A Departmental Child Day Care Review Committee was struck in the fall of 2000 to review options with respect to child care in Saskatchewan. A central activity for the review committee has been to determine what parents want and need from child care, and the role of government in supporting those needs. To help address these questions, the committee tendered a child care use and preferences survey in February 2001. Over 1,200 parents participated in the study in March 2001. Results of the survey will contribute to provincial policy directions for Child Care in the future.

Client Outcomes for 2000-2001

- The total expenditure for Income Security programs in 2000-2001 was $333,924,596. Of this amount, 98 per cent was provided in the form of payments or benefits to low-income families and individuals or third party service providers.
- The Building Independence (BI) programs are intended to support parents' decision to work. With the introduction of *BI* programs and an improved provincial economy, the social assistance caseload has continued to decline for more than six years. In 2000-2001, an average of 33,363 cases (individuals and families) received benefits under SAP. This represents a decrease of 886 cases or a 2.5 per cent decrease in cases compared to 1999-2000 and an overall decrease of 6,861 cases or a 17 per cent decrease from the 1994-1995 average. The number of single-parent families receiving assistance dropped by nine per cent and the number of two-parent families receiving assistance dropped by 23 per cent from 1998 to 2001. Also of note, the length of time on assistance for families with children declined by more than 25 per cent over the same period.
- As of March 31, 2001, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit was being paid to approximately 33,100 Saskatchewan families with 67,800 children. Approximately 66 per cent were single parents, and 34 per cent were two-parent families. The average SCB payment was $111 per month. This does not include 8,800 families living on reserve who receive federal child benefits.
- During 2000-2001, an average of 6,480 families received monthly SES benefits. This is an increase of 640 families per month, an 11 per cent increase, from last fiscal year. Approximately 70 per cent of families receiving SES benefits were single parents and 30 per cent were two-parent families. The average monthly SES payment was $148.
- Among Canadian provinces, Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of seniors but one of the lowest rates of poverty among the elderly. The Saskatchewan Income Plan provides supplementary income for senior citizens. In 2000-2001, an average of 15,259 low-income seniors received SIP benefits each month. On average, SIP benefits added almost $663 to the annual income of these individuals.
- Under the Child Nutrition and Development Program (CNDP), government and communities work together to reduce the nutritional risks to children from low-income families. In 2000-2001, funding of $1.2 million was provided to over 45 projects delivered in numerous locations by community-based organizations, local governments, schools and school divisions

across the province. Annually, one million meals are provided to children through CNDP projects. Benefits are immediate and long-term; good nutrition has a positive effect in all areas of a child's life.

- Throughout the year, additional funding helped community organizations develop services and approaches which contributed to the social and economic well-being of low-income persons in Saskatchewan. In 2000-2001, funding was provided to the Unemployed Workers Help and Counselling Centre in Regina, Community Reference Panels in Beauval and Cumberland House, the Salvation Army in Saskatoon, the Saskatoon Core Neighborhood Youth Co-op, and to community-based organizations to provide budget counselling and skill development services for social assistance clients.
- As of March 31, 2001, there were 135 licensed child day care centres operating in the province with a total of 4,951 child care spaces. An additional 299 family child care providers were licensed to operate some 2,215 spaces in their homes. These spaces provide licensed services for just over five per cent of children under 12 years of age with working mothers in the province.
- During 2000-2001, the Child Care Subsidy Program funded licensed child care facilities on behalf of just over 3,400 children from about 2,700 low-income families. The monthly subsidy averaged $220 per child and helped some 2,400 single parents, primarily women, and 300 two-parent families, to participate in the workforce or receive training.
- The Child Care Subsidy Program continued to issue a 100 per cent child care fee subsidy for parents on social assistance whose children are professionally referred to a licensed child care service because of a diagnosed special need. During 2000-2001, the program provided full fees directly to the child care facilities on behalf of 213 children in 154 families. As a result, these children receive help needed to improve speech, language, learning preparedness and readiness for school.

Update of Divisional Plans for 2000-2001

Income Security Redesign focuses on economic and social inclusion as key priorities for government policy. Redesign work has continued throughout the year with particular emphasis on consultation, research and service delivery review.

Meetings have been held among senior Department officials and community groups and stakeholders throughout the province to acquire input into the next stage of Income Security Redesign. Response has been very encouraging and supportive of the approach taken in redesign and will assist greatly in future planning.

Programs and services provided by Income Security continue to provide basic income support and facilitate the independence of individuals and families. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan is a program of last resort for people in transition to employment and those unable to support themselves. To increase program effectiveness, the Division is working on the development of a new benefit structure which is simpler, promotes client independence and reduces barriers. The Department has proceeded with the planning of service delivery enhancements which redeploys staff resources to activities which overcome barriers to employment, education, training and community participation.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and the Saskatchewan Child Benefit continue to assist families to meet the needs of their children. In doing so, these programs enable low-income working parents to remain in the workforce and reduce the barriers for parents moving from social assistance to work.

Child Day Care Branch became a part of the Income Security Division on February 1, 2001, recognizing child care as an important support for the Building Independence strategy. The amendments to *The Child Care Act* that had been tabled in the legislature the previous spring were finalized and proclaimed for September, 2000. The branch implemented the relevant program changes immediately, and proceeded to make the necessary changes to the accompanying *Child Care Regulations*.

The Child Care Program implemented a revised grant program to licensed child care centres. Effective September 1, 2000, the previous centre operating grant was combined with the wage enhancement grant for trained centre staff, to create a new single monthly

Early Childhood Services Grant. Along with the increase to grant funding overall, the new, more simplified grant administration means centres and staff receive the maximum benefit for available child care centre funding.

Income Security Division has embarked on these new directions and met these challenges while continuing to fulfil its primary obligations to provide income support to children, families, and individuals including seniors to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty, provide services and supports to enhance client independence, and to support communities to help their members.

Plans for 2001-2002

Beginning in May 2001, new services and streamlined administrative procedures for SAP will be introduced through pilot projects in Regina and Yorkton. The pilot projects will feature service delivery enhancements, including use of a call centre as the first point of contact for new applicants; Jobs First, a new service jointly managed with Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST) where new applicants are made aware of local job opportunities; and First Step, where new social assistance clients attend group orientation sessions. A new Transition Planning case management model is being introduced which will minimize barriers and maximize client independence. The model will incorporate mechanisms for more integrated case planning between divisions, departments and other service providers. It is anticipated all of the pilot elements will be introduced in Yorkton in May/June 2001. In Regina, Jobs First will begin in May and other pilot elements will come on line in Fall 2001.

The division is also continuing to work with PSEST to improve employment and training supports for low-income people.

The Department is working toward the restructuring of the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan in an effort to reduce the barriers to independence, to promote and facilitate the transition to work, to simplify program administration and to create a more understandable program.

A key goal of Income Security Redesign is economic and social inclusion for people with disabilities. The Department is proceeding on a number of fronts to develop and enhance supports that address the impacts of disabilities.

In an effort to make the SES program more effective, the Department will be engaging in a public awareness campaign and will be reviewing and modifying program rules.

Access to affordable, safe housing is a major concern for low-income households, and especially for those on social assistance. The Department is working with Municipal Affairs and Housing to examine options which will increase the accessibility to affordable quality housing.

The Department is working toward the goal of enhancing economic support for low-income parents using licensed or unlicensed child care, while preserving the existing licensed child care infrastructure. The Department will pursue the development of a broad Child Care Strategy linked to Income Security Redesign as well as the provincial Early Childhood Development Strategy. New child care spaces will be developed in 2001-2002 in high risk communities under the Early Childhood Development initiative.

Although the *Child Care Regulations* amendments were nearing completion by the end of 2000-2001, they are expected to be approved with a coming into force date midway through the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The development of the Licensees' Manual will follow implementation of the amended *Child Care Regulations.*

Departmental committees have been established to explore methods of enhancing services for at-risk youth in Department programs to reduce the likelihood that the youth will become dependent on social assistance as adults. The committees are now reviewing divisional practises as they impact youth transitions to independence and are expected to make recommendations for new approaches, programs, and service enhancements to executive management in September 2001.

The coming year promises to be a busy period for the Division. Existing practises have been carefully re-examined with attention to their client outcomes and consistency with policy objectives, and an ambitious agenda of policy and program development has been established. These new initiatives provide an opportunity to introduce positive changes to the lives of many vulnerable low-income individuals and families.

Public Access to Information about Income Security Programs

Information about Income Security Programs is available through the internet, pamphlets and brochures, and toll-free inquiry lines.

Internet Access

Information about Income Security Programs is available on-line at: *http://www.gov.sk.ca/socserv*
The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) Policy Manual and Social Assistance Handbook can be found on the Social Services web site in the Publications section of the web site at: *http://www.gov.sk.ca/socserv/financial/sapindex.html*

Publications and Brochures

SAP Regulations and Policy Manuals are widely distributed to regional offices, other provincial and federal departments, community groups, service providers and advocates.

Educational handouts in the *About* series and other pamphlets on Income Security Programs are available at regional offices or from the Communications and Public Education Branch (787-3686) including:

- Income Security Programs
- Directory of Communities – Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Social Assistance Handbook
- Social Assistance Rates
- Social Assistance – Your Right to Appeal
- Social Assistance Facts and Trends
- Social Assistance and Accountability
- Security Deposits and Rent Payments
- Farmers – Provincial Income Security Programs
- Clients with HIV/AIDS and the Social Assistance Program
- Social Assistance and SaskPower/SaskEnergy
- Provincial Training Allowance and Social Assistance
- Interview Information
- The Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

Toll Free Numbers

Saskatchewan Child Benefit

1-877-696-7546

Benefit Adjustment

1-888-286-0399 or
787-3459 in Regina

Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

1-877-696-7546 or
787-4723 in Regina

Saskatchewan Income Plan (Seniors' Benefits)

1-800-667-7161 or
787-2681 in Regina

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan

1-866-221-5200

Child Day Care

1-800-667-7155

Several regional offices serving rural and northern areas of the province have toll-free lines.

Benefit Administration and Audit Services

Introduction of Benefit Administration and Audit Services (BAAS) took place in October 2000. BAAS is a special unit located in Saskatoon, from which services are delivered on a provincial basis. Clients can contact the BAAS office using toll-free telephone numbers. Services are provided to clients receiving Provincial Training Allowance who require social assistance top up, clients who farm or operate small businesses, and long term clients. Development of this unit resulted in 1,900 cases being transferred from regions to centralized service delivery. The formation of BAAS contributed to a decrease in the provincial average cases per worker from 170.6 for March 2000 to 155.2 for March 2001. The impact on regional offices of reduced caseloads allows workers increased time for transition planning. BAAS also provides services related to delivery of social assistance benefits through northern Bands; matching of benefits with other provinces, some federal government departments and other provincial departments; and random audits which were previously the responsibility of regional offices.

Saskatchewan Social Programs - Visiting Delegations

Within the past year, Saskatchewan has hosted officials from Nova Scotia, Manitoba and the United Kingdom. The delegations came to Saskatchewan to study provincial income security programs and delivery models that help reduce child poverty and lower the barriers that prevent people from leaving welfare. The focus has been the Building Independence initiative. Archy Kirkwood, chairman of the United Kingdom's House of Commons Social Security Committee, said when the committee was formed, British policy analysts told them the place to go for good ideas was Canada, and specifically Saskatchewan. He indicated that Saskatchewan's programs are, "quite clearly advanced, compared to anything else that's available."

Public opinion poll

The Government of Saskatchewan released results of a public opinion poll conducted March April 2001 by Anderson Fast. Results pertaining to Income Security are summarized below:

Issue	Poll Result		Factor/Departmental Action
Rights and Obligations	88%	of residents think everyone has the right to get welfare from the government if they need it.	Citizenship means each individual has the right to a reasonable opportunity to be part of economic and community life. Each citizen also has the obligation to contribute to the fullest extent of their capacities.
	95%	think people receiving welfare have an obligation to try to get work or training.	
Caseload Trend	49%	of residents think the number of people receiving welfare has been increasing over the last four years.	Caseload decrease has been significant – a decline of 17% in the past six years.
Work Concepts	52%	of residents think up to 50% of those people currently receiving welfare are able to work;	44% of the social assistance caseload for March 2001 is fully employable.
	41%	think more than 50% are able to work.	
Adequacy	37%	of residents think the rates for a single employable person without children are too low;	Adequacy of social assistance rates and the development of a long term response to adequacy issues continues to be a major focus of Income Security Redesign.
	23%	think the rates are too high; and,	
	34%	think the rates are just about right.	
	44%	of Saskatchewan residents think the rates for a single mother with two children are too low;	As further supports are developed outside of social assistance, the Income Security Division is in a better position to examine what needs to be done within the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. This work continues with the help of people throughout the province through our consultation process.
	7%	think the rates are too high; and	
	42%	think the rates are just about right.	
Housing	52%	of residents think the housing portion of the money provided to people on welfare should go toward building affordable public housing.	The Department is exploring options with Municipal Affairs and Housing for improved opportunities for low-income people regarding housing needs, particularly in inner cities.
	27%	of residents think the government should provide financial assistance to non-profit groups to build more affordable housing;	
	21%	think the government should build more public housing;	
	17%	think they should give support to low-income families; and	Access to affordable, safe housing is a major concern for low-income households, and especially for those on social assistance. Vacancy rates, particularly at the lower-cost end of the housing market, have declined sharply in recent years, causing rental costs to rise while incomes have remained relatively flat.
	12%	think the government should create incentives to encourage the private sector to build more affordable housing for low-income families.	

Public Access to Information about Income Security Programs

Information about Income Security Programs is available through the internet, pamphlets and brochures, and toll-free inquiry lines.

Internet Access

Information about Income Security Programs is available on-line at: *http://www.gov.sk.ca/socserv/* The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) Policy Manual and Social Assistance Handbook can be found on the Social Services web site in the Publications section of the web site at: *http://www.gov.sk.ca/socserv/financial/sapindex.html*

Publications and Brochures

SAP Regulations and Policy Manuals are widely distributed to regional offices, other provincial and federal departments, community groups, service providers and advocates.

Educational handouts in the *About* series and other pamphlets on Income Security Programs are available at regional offices or from the Communications and Public Education Branch (787-3686) including:

- Income Security Programs
- Directory of Communities — Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Social Assistance Handbook
- Social Assistance Rates
- Social Assistance — Your Right to Appeal
- Social Assistance Facts and Trends
- Social Assistance and Accountability
- Security Deposits and Rent Payments
- Farmers — Provincial Income Security Programs
- Clients with HIV/AIDS and the Social Assistance Program
- Social Assistance and SaskPower/SaskEnergy
- Provincial Training Allowance and Social Assistance
- Interview Information
- The Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

Toll Free Numbers

Saskatchewan Child Benefit

1-877-696-7546

Benefit Adjustment

1-888-286-0399 or
787-3459 in Regina

Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

1-877-696-7546 or
787-4723 in Regina

Saskatchewan Income Plan (Seniors' Benefits)

1-800-667-7161 or
787-2681 in Regina

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan

1-866-221-5200

Child Day Care

1-800-667-7155

Several regional offices serving rural and northern areas of the province have toll-free lines.

Benefit Administration and Audit Services

Introduction of Benefit Administration and Audit Services (BAAS) took place in October 2000. BAAS is a special unit located in Saskatoon, from which services are delivered on a provincial basis. Clients can contact the BAAS office using toll-free telephone numbers. Services are provided to clients receiving Provincial Training Allowance who require social assistance top up, clients who farm or operate small businesses, and long term clients. Development of this unit resulted in 1,900 cases being transferred from regions to centralized service delivery. The formation of BAAS contributed to a decrease in the provincial average cases per worker from 170.6 for March 2000 to 155.2 for March 2001. The impact on regional offices of reduced caseloads allows workers increased time for transition planning. BAAS also provides services related to delivery of social assistance benefits through northern Bands; matching of benefits with other provinces, some federal government departments and other provincial departments; and random audits which were previously the responsibility of regional offices.

Saskatchewan Social Programs - Visiting Delegations

Within the past year, Saskatchewan has hosted officials from Nova Scotia, Manitoba and the United Kingdom. The delegations came to Saskatchewan to study provincial income security programs and delivery models that help reduce child poverty and lower the barriers that prevent people from leaving welfare. The focus has been the Building Independence initiative. Archy Kirkwood, chairman of the United Kingdom's House of Commons Social Security Committee, said when the committee was formed, British policy analysts told them the place to go for good ideas was Canada, and specifically Saskatchewan. He indicated that Saskatchewan's programs are, "quite clearly advanced, compared to anything else that's available."

Public opinion poll

The Government of Saskatchewan released results of a public opinion poll conducted March/April 2001 by Anderson Fast. Results pertaining to Income Security are summarized below:

Issue	Poll Result		Factor/Departmental Action
Rights and Obligations	88%	of residents think everyone has the right to get welfare from the government if they need it.	Citizenship means each individual has the right to a reasonable opportunity to be part of economic and community life. Each citizen also has the obligation to contribute to the fullest extent of their capacities.
	95%	think people receiving welfare have an obligation to try to get work or training.	
Caseload Trend	49%	of residents think the number of people receiving welfare has been increasing over the last four years.	Caseload decrease has been significant – a decline of 17% in the past six years.
Work Concepts	52%	of residents think up to 50% of those people currently receiving welfare are able to work;	44% of the social assistance caseload for March 2001 is fully employable.
	41%	think more than 50% are able to work.	
Adequacy	37%	of residents think the rates for a single employable person without children are too low;	Adequacy of social assistance rates and the development of a long term response to adequacy issues continues to be a major focus of Income Security Redesign.
	23%	think the rates are too high; and,	
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	44%	of Saskatchewan residents think the rates for a single mother with two children are too low;	As further supports are developed outside of social assistance, the Income Security Division is in a better position to examine what needs to be done within the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. This work continues with the help of people throughout the province through our consultation process.
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	12%	think the government should create incentives to encourage the private sector to build more affordable housing for low-income families.	

Barriers Research Findings

In summary, the types of problems and barriers to employment identified by clients who participated in the Social Assistance Client Barriers Survey are as follows:

- **Transportation:**
  - 64 per cent of respondents reported having access to a car when they need it.
  - 39 per cent feel lack of transportation is a problem.
- **Availability of Food:**
  - For 30 per cent food insecurity is a problem monthly.
  - 80 per cent indicated that food availability is not affecting their ability to work.
- **Child Care:**

  Most respondents with children would rather work if wages covered child care costs.
- **Learning Difficulty:**

  20 per cent of respondents said they had been diagnosed as having a learning disability by a teacher or health professional.
- **Legal Problems:**

  20 per cent of respondents have at least one legal problem.
- **Health Problems:**
  - 59 per cent of respondents have one or more physical, mental or emotional health problems.
  - Just about 80 per cent do not perceive the health issue as affecting their ability to find or keep work.
- **Addictions:**
  - 21 per cent of families report problems with alcohol, drugs, or gambling in the last year.
  - Only five per cent see their use of alcohol or drugs as a problem.

Three quarters of the respondents reported at least one major barrier to finding and keeping work. Even so, respondents were optimistic about their future. Between 80 and 90 per cent feel in control of their future. The factors reported most as making it hard to find work include being on social assistance, having Aboriginal ancestry and having a disability. The research supports Income Security Redesign directions and provides important program development information.

Case Example - Integrated Early Childhood Services

Meadow Lake and Area Early Childhood Services

Key stakeholders in the community of Meadow Lake and area have collaborated in the development of a project to provide a continuum of early childhood services to meet the diverse range of needs in the community. Stakeholders include the following: Meadow Lake and Area Early Childhood Intervention Program (ECIP), Northwest Health District, Meadow Lake School Division, Flying Dust First Nation, North West Friendship Centre, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Positively Parenting, Meadow Lake Association for Community Living, and Social Services (Child Day Care, Family and Youth Services, and Community Living Division).

The partnership, under the newly amalgamated board, is called Meadow Lake and Area Early Childhood Services, and now manages the delivery of services that include: (1) in-home early childhood intervention, primarily for children under the age of three; (2) centre-based preschool services with supplementary home visiting for preschool children who may be at risk for delayed development; (3) centre-based child day care services. The former board of the Meadow Lake Day Care dissolved as the centre relocated and expanded to become the foundation for the newly integrated early childhood program. The new program has been received with great enthusiasm in the community and serves as a model to other communities in the province.

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Community Living Division

Programs and Services

Community Living provides programs and services for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families, in the community and in the Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw. Over the past two decades, the Division has tried to move as many people as possible with intellectual disabilities out of institutions and into the community, with the appropriate support.

Clients of Community Living Division are primarily individuals with intellectual disabilities who require various supports to live in their community. Supports are focused in the following areas:

- Case management
- Therapy support
- Family support
- Community-based services

These services are provided by Department staff located throughout the province, and through community-based agencies in numerous communities across Saskatchewan.

Valley View Centre provides 376 beds for persons with intellectual disabilities.

The Division delivers its programs and services primarily through an extensive system of community-based social, residential, vocational and early childhood agencies. It works in partnership with provincially-based representatives and advocacy organizations. The Division is a signator of a three-way partnership agreement between Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living.

This partnership agreement sets out a common vision and set of principles that are based on people with intellectual disabilities having inherent dignity. The three partners share a joint commitment that people be surrounded by inclusive communities which respect and value independence. The three partners have agreed to work together on strategic planning, specific new programs and projects, increased communication and on the development of new partnerships between other agencies and organizations.

Objectives of Community Living

The mission of the Community Living Division is to support the development of inclusive communities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The Division assists individuals, families and communities to ensure that services are appropriate and accessible; and empowers those with intellectual disabilities to make choices regarding the services they receive.

The program activities of the Division reflect the overall Departmental objective of supporting Saskatchewan citizens to live in their community.

Since its inception in 1972, the Community Living Division has based its activities and operations on the principle of normalization. This involves the "use of means which are as culturally normative as possible" - Wolf Wolfensberger.

Budget and Staffing

Community services provided by the Community Living Division are delivered through the Department's six regions. Regional staff (53.5 positions) are located in 15 major centres in Saskatchewan; seven central administration positions are located in Moose Jaw.

The Division also operates Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw with a staff of 466.9 FTEs.

The total Divisional budget expenditure of 2000-2001 was $64,263 M. The Department funded many new initiatives in 2000-2001 including three group home programs in Regina and two in Saskatoon, group living programs in Hague and Waldheim and new Supported Living Programs in Kinistino and Lloydminster. New funding of $300,000 was provided to Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres for an initiative to enhance the opportunities for employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities in communities throughout Saskatchewan.

In addition, numerous programs throughout the province received additional funds to either increase the number of funded spaces or enhance the supports within existing programs. For example, additional funds were provided to supportive living programs in Porcupine Plain, Nipawin and Ituna.

Community Living Activities

Community Case Management

Social work staff support individuals, families and private-service home operators through individual assessment, planning, and case management. As well, staff provide advice and assistance to community boards which provide residential and vocational assistance.

CLD provincial community caseload statistics as at March 31, 2001 compared with the previous year:

	2000	2001
Individual Clients	3,188	3,225
Families	241	232
Private Service Home Operators	286	274
CBO Programs	147	153

Therapy Support

Each region has a Program Development Consultant (PDC) who is available to agencies or individuals for consultation and who provides training on ethics, behavioural intervention and comprehensive individual support planning.

Family Support

Family support services are designed to:

- help parents and their children through the initial adjustment to disabilities;
- diminish or eliminate problems in family functioning caused by a disability;
- help families and the community service system establish a developmental model for pre-school and school-aged children;
- help families make appropriate planning decisions about educational, housing and lifestyle issues at appropriate times during development.

Respite services are an essential component of the Division's family support initiatives. These services help families by providing short-term residential care to allow for planned breaks or for crisis management. Respite services are provided by resource homes located in Regina and Saskatoon, or in the case of families not having easy access to the resource homes, through the Outreach Program. The Outreach Program provides funding to offset the cost incurred by a family in accommodating their family member in their own home or other local resource as needed.

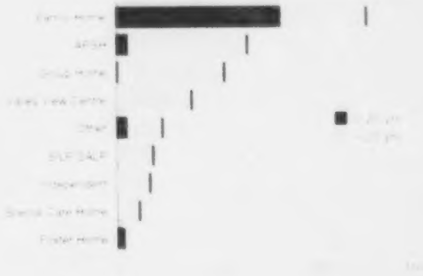
In 2000-2001, the Division made available 5,475 person days of respite support through the resource homes ($.49M), and over 27,200 person days of respite through the Outreach Program ($.88 M). Total respite expenditures made by the Department in the support of individuals and families were approximately $1.4 million.

Additional respite services in rural Saskatchewan are provided by a number of group homes which maintain a space in their facility for this purpose. Such services are available in Melville, Hague, Prince Albert, Porcupine Plain, North Battleford, Kinistino, Outlook and Kindersley.

The use of this resource by families has seen tremendous growth over the past decade, particularly, expenditures in the Outreach program. *(See chart - Expenditures - Outreach Program, page 29.)*

In keeping with the philosophy of Family Centred Services, the division also supports families whose children have intensive support needs which cannot be served with existing respite services. In these situations, individualized support plans are developed with the family and facilitated through use of preventive service provisions under *The Child and Family Services Act*. In 2000-2001, the Division supported 48 families for a total expenditure of $299,020.

Where do people on CLD Cascloads Live?



The majority of children and young adults on the Community Living caseload reside in their family homes.

This number has increased over the past several years (i.e. the number of children and young adults less than 21 years of age living at home has increased by 34 per cent since 1993).

Community-based Service

Since its inception, the division has been guided by the principle that services should be community-based

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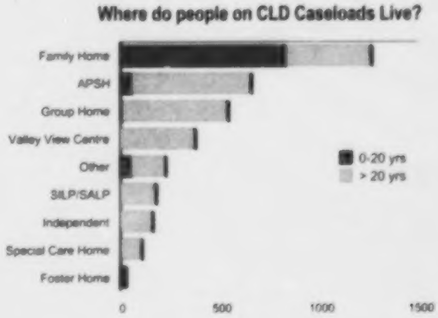
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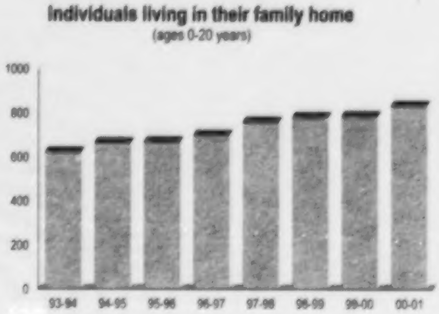
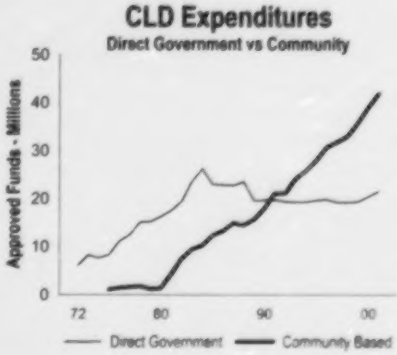
Community-based Service

Since its inception, the division has been guided by the principle that services should be community-based and locally-controlled. Additionally, the Division promotes a broad range of options to assure the least restrictive setting in each case.



The following chart illustrates the growth of funding to community-based organizations since the early seventies.



The Department is increasingly involved in community partnerships where several agencies work together to provide services to meet their community's needs.

Residential Services in the Community

Group homes ($21.85 million) provide accommodation, personal care and individualized programming in a family-like setting. Group homes usually accommodate no more than six people. Most residents attend organized daytime activities such as those provided in schools, sheltered workshops and activity centres.

Some of these homes have been developed as group living homes, a modified group home where individuals share a house and are responsible for their own basic shelter costs. Community Living Division provides funds for support staff which may be required.

Approved Private Service Homes are licensed under *The Residential Services Act.* Home operators provide direct care services for people with mental and physical disabilities. A new rate structure was implemented in 1997-1998 which provides a more consistent payment system for the daily living supports provided to persons living in these homes. These payments are provided on a fee-for-service basis through Social Services Income Security Division.

Supportive Living Programs ($.51 million) provide the necessary supports to enable adults with intellectual disabilities to live in their own homes or apartments.

Supported Apartment Living Programs ($1.69 million) provide an alternative for those who need more than supportive living but less than the supports of a group home.

Vocational/Developmental/ Employment Services

Activity Centres ($7.87 million) are facilities designed for individuals who have limited motor and sensory development. Programming emphasizes basic living skills, socialization, and recreation. Although some activities may be of a productive nature, they are secondary to the primary goal of maximizing an individual's potential in the community setting.

Employment/Transitional Training Services (sheltered workshops) ($3.42 million) focus on training and production. Clients develop work and life skills until they are able to reach their potential level of independence or obtain competitive employment. A portion of the profit realized by workshops is returned to clients.

A number of programs provide day activities that range from full-time, centre-based activities to integration of seniors into existing programs.

Long-term Employment Initiatives ($.62 million) ensure ongoing employment for persons with disabilities by providing support services such as job coaching, wage subsidy initiatives, or training-on-the-job.

In 2000-2001, nearly 270 individuals were successfully supported in employment through the program.

A review of the Long Term Employment Initiative and Employment Assistance for Persons with Disabilities was commissioned by Social Services, Saskatchewan Health , Post Secondary Education and Skills Training, and Human Resources Development Canada in 2000. The results of this review will provide observations that assist in the enhancement of existing employment support programs and in the development of new initiatives.

Early Childhood Intervention Services

This program provides home-based training and support to parents of children up to five years of age with developmental disabilities. Programming occurs mainly in the child's home. The program is administered by non-profit, chiefly parent-controlled community boards.

A provincial council provides a forum to develop standards and discuss new ideas.

In 2000-2001, the Division provided $1.93 million to 16 Early Childhood Intervention Programs.

Funding for Advocacy and Support Grants totalling $1.62 million were made to several provincial organizations to provide advocacy and specialized resource services on behalf of people with disabilities. For example Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Inc. received $241,270 to assist with providing interpretive services for people with hearing impairments; The Voice of People with Disabilities, a provincial advocacy group received $55,170 and government provided $224,320 to the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living for staff development and quality assurance initiatives in community-based organizations providing services for people with disabilities.

Valley View Centre

Valley View Centre, Moose Jaw provides long-term care services for people with intellectual disabilities. The centre is home to 376 adults whose needs cannot currently be met within the wider community. Valley View Centre operates North View Home, Prince Albert, a 12-bed community living residence. The centre is accredited nationally with the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation.

Staff enjoy a close relationship with the Family Advisory Group. This group is comprised of eight family members who work together with centre staff to develop new ideas, examine concerns of families, and develop plans to enhance the quality of life for those people who live at the centre.

Valley View Centre provides a wide range of services to the resident, organized around the values of respect, compassion, teamwork, equality, honesty, humour, and communication. Services include:

- resident care - nursing, psychological, recreational, vocational and behavioural therapy, pastoral care and volunteer services;
- support services - laboratory, x-ray, pharmacy, dental, laundry, security, safety, housekeeping and food services; and
- physician services.

Valley View Centre operates Camp Thunderbird, which is located at Candle Lake and provides camping services for approximately 400 people with intellectual disabilities who live throughout Saskatchewan. Camp Thunderbird is open from June to August of each year.

All community options are explored before consideration is given to admitting a person to the centre and admissions are limited. For example, in 1996-1997, 20 people were admitted to Valley View Centre and 19 people returned to live in the greater community. In the 2000-2001 fiscal year, two people were admitted to the centre and there were two discharges.

Key events occurring at Valley View Centre in the 2000-2001 fiscal year included:

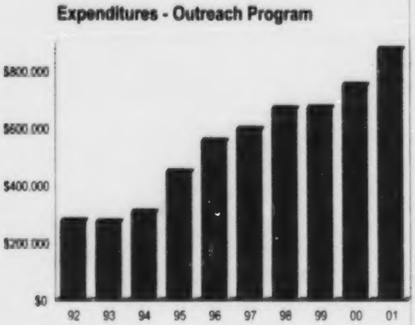
- completion of a 5 year strategic plan;
- formal participation on the Moose Jaw Thunder Creek Health District Ethics Committee;
- development of an information booklet about the centre;
- review and revision of process for resident care planning;
- utilization of 24 hour Emergency Medical Services with local health district;
- assessment of staff training needs.

Key Trends

Overall caseload numbers have not changed to any significant degree in the past decade. However, the number of both children and adults with severe and challenging complex needs being referred to the Division for both case-management and community-based services has and continues to grow.

Community Living Division continues to receive requests from mental health services, district health boards and families to provide fiscal and case-management services to people requiring community-living services.

The Department strives to support families to meet the needs of children. Community Living Division supports families through case-management services and access to respite funding provided by the Outreach Program. The following table illustrates the increase in usage and expenditures over the past decade.


Expenditures - Outreach Program

Many individuals and their families have expectations for access to skills training and employment opportunities rather than centre-based day programs. Through co-operation with Post Secondary Education and Skills Training, more training and employment opportunities are being realized in communities across Saskatchewan.

The implementation of Saskatchewan Basic Standards has begun with all community-based organizations funded through Community Living Division. This approach to service review and agency planning is increasing awareness of quality outcome measures for third-party service providers.

Update on progress of 2000-2001 plans:

- Completed and implemented a training package on abuse prevention for community-based organizations.
- Community-based organization service agreements were reviewed and updated as required. This is an on-going process involving the Department and its community service partners.
- The final year of the three year commitment to wages and benefits was implemented in the CBO sector.
- Completion of a quality assurance checklist and its implementation in the CBO sector.
- Community Living Division completed a study on service delivery models for people with high behavioural needs with a community partner and continues to investigate creative solutions to community delivery of residential and vocational services.
- Began the development of a three year strategic plan for Valley View Centre and community programs.
- Continue to consult with community-based organizations on a regular basis.
- Established a union/management committee to review workloads in the community program to assist in establishing staffing benchmarks.

Plans for 2001-2002

- The Department continues to work with the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living and the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres in the establishment of program standards in the community-based network of vocational, residential, early childhood and supported employment initiatives.
- Continue to encourage new and creative models of service delivery that support communities in responding to the residential and vocational service needs of their citizens, including those with the greatest intellectual/behavioural challenges.
- Consider the observations presented in the Post Secondary Education and Skills Training review of the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) program; and Long Term Employment Initiative (LTEI) program; and determine if there are implications for change.
- Review the mandate of the Division in light of the community demand to serve a broader population.
- Ongoing consultations with community-based organizations.
- Formalize short and long term planning processes at Valley View Centre.
- Establish a Residents' Council at Valley View Centre.
- Conclude bargaining a new collective agreement with CUPE 600 representing the staff of Community Living Division.
- Continue the assessment of staff development requirements throughout Community Living Division.
- Implement staff development plan throughout Community Living Division based on staff development needs assessment.
- Develop and monitor indicators to aid in evaluating and improving care services at Valley View Centre.
- Development of Valley View Centre code of ethics.

Family and Youth Services Division

Programs and Services

A diverse range of services is provided to the public through the Family and Youth Services Division of the Department. It provides targeted support to at-risk families and youth to prevent further family breakdown; child welfare services to protect children from harm and provide children in the Department's care with appropriate residential and personal services; and community support programs and custody programs for young offenders.

The range of services described later in this section will be organized in the continuum of service care they provide, starting from the supportive and developmental, through to intervention and custody. Philosophically, all the programs are attempting to promote or preserve a healthy, functioning family unit, often in the face of multiple social issues including poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, and violence.

The Division offers the following services:

Family Services

Targeted Family-based Support Services

- Prevention and Support Grants
- Parenting Education
- Teen and Young Parent Program

Child Welfare

- Child Protection Services
- Services to Children in Care
- Foster Care
- Adoption

Youth Services

- Support Program for 16 and 17 Year Old Youth
- Prevention of the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Through Prostitution
- Community-Based Young Offender Services
- Custody-Based Young Offender Services

Objectives of Division

The objectives of the Family and Youth Services Division are to promote and support the well-being of at-risk Saskatchewan children, youth and families by:

- providing assistance and support to children and youth in need of protection;
- providing family support, child placement, or young offender services;
- working with youth in conflict with the law in ways that hold them accountable for their unlawful behaviour, reduce the likelihood they will re-offend, and protect the public;
- providing for counselling and related assistance to victims of sexual assault and family violence;
- providing or facilitating services which includes supports to teen and young parents, and parenting education programs.

Budget and Staffing

The total expenditure for Family and Youth Services in 2000-2001 was $113,058,615. Of this amount, $38,898,529 went to pay for services the Division provided directly to clients (e.g. foster care.) A further $18,301,923 was directed to purchase services on behalf of clients through approximately 118 community-based organizations throughout the province. Services range from crisis and after-hour services, to family and youth group homes, teen parent services, family support services, counselling, prevention and residential services. The balance of $55,858,163 supported the Division's staffing requirements, which consist of 1,100.3 full-time equivalents in regional, central and facility work locations. Forty-two central office staff are responsible for: the development of programs, policies and legislation; technical support; regional services delivery support, and accountability.

Family and Youth Services	2000-2001 Expenditures	Delivery
Facilities for Children and Youth	$ 29,897,873	Regional/ Central
Family and Youth Community Services	38,898,529	Regional
Family and Youth CBO Services	18,301,923	Regional
Regional Service Centres	22,674,390	Regional
Administration	3,285,900	Central
Total	**$113,058,615**	

Family and Youth Services Division

Programs and Services

A diverse range of services is provided to the public through the Family and Youth Services Division of the Department. It provides targeted support to at-risk families and youth to prevent further family breakdown; child welfare services to protect children from harm and provide children in the Department's care with appropriate residential and personal services; and community support programs and custody programs for young offenders.

The range of services described later in this section will be organized in the continuum of service care they provide, starting from the supportive and developmental, through to intervention and custody. Philosophically, all the programs are attempting to promote or preserve a healthy, functioning family unit, often in the face of multiple social issues including poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, and violence.

The Division offers the following services:

Family Services

Targeted Family-based Support Services

- Prevention and Support Grants
- Parenting Education
- Teen and Young Parent Program

Child Welfare

- Child Protection Services
- Services to Children in Care
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Service delivery is augmented by community-based organizations, First Nations Child and Family Services agencies, and prevention and support grants to community groups.

Families receiving services have a range of needs requiring a continuum of services. The Department makes many referrals to community agencies and to other government departments on behalf of our clients. There is a continuing need for the Department to work in partnership with other agencies and departments to address the varying needs of our families and clients. For example, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is a condition characterized by a combination of physical and central nervous system abnormalities that are a result of maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy which results in a life-long condition. Accordingly, the Department works in partnership with other departments and agencies to address the needs of these individuals and their families.

Services to First Nations and the Métis Nation

Since 1993, Social Services has been working closely with First Nations as they develop child and family services agencies on reserve. By the end of 2000-2001, there were 17 agencies operating in the province providing a full range of child and family services to 64 Bands throughout the province and one agency that is in the start up phase. The agencies have full authority to provide all the services outlined in *The Child and Family Services Act* for their Band members living on reserve.

The agencies provide family support services, planning and placement services for children in care, as well as child protection services for reserve communities. The agencies are consulted regarding case planning for Band members living off-reserve, as well as when reconnecting children in care with First Nations' communities and families.

Of equal importance is the design and direction of services to First Nations' persons living off-reserve and to Métis people. There have been several projects developed with First Nations and Métis groups, primarily in community development and preventive services to families and to youth.

Key Trends

The over-representation of First Nations and Métis people in the Department's programs continues. Sixty five per cent of the children in care are First Nation and another 10 per cent are Métis. Seventy-three per cent of the children in young offender custody programs are First Nations or Métis. First Nations and Métis children come into care more often than their non-Aboriginal counterparts and they stay in care longer.

Update to plans for 2000-2001

Existing preventive family and youth programs have been maintained.

Matters relating to the partnering with First Nations for long-term design and direction of young offender programs have been discussed. This has included dialogue with the federal government regarding funding issues.

Employment Equity Committees have continued to meet and the representation of Aboriginal employees in the Department stands at 15.3 per cent.

Pilot community reference panels have been established in the communities of Cumberland House and Beauval to provide input and guidance for the application of Departmental programs.

Outcomes to plans for 2000-2001

The numbers of First Nations and Métis children being placed in First Nations and Métis alternative or extended family care has increased.

The number of Aboriginal children placed with "persons of sufficient interest" has grown from 7 per cent in March 2000 to 9.2 per cent one year later.

The existing First Nations and Métis prevention programs off-reserve have not shown a reduction to date in First Nations and Métis children coming into care.

Aboriginal staffing overall for the Department is at 15.3 percent which exceeds the Human Rights Commission target.

Plans for 2001-2002

In co-operation with the First Nations Child and Family Service agencies, developmental work will continue for on-reserve programs and services.

The Department will assist in the establishment of social development structures in urban centres and northern communities.

An evaluation of the community reference panels in Cumberland House and Beauval will occur in 2001-2002.

Discussions regarding self-government in the area of child and family services will continue in the context of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations/ Canada/Saskatchewan Governance Table. These discussions will include the scope and application of First Nation jurisdiction and authority in child and family services.

Similar discussions will occur with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council.

Targeted Family Support

Prevention and Support Grants

Prevention and Support Grants are one component of Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children. The grants go to community-based services which support vulnerable children, youth and families.

In 2000-2001, 62 projects received funding for social, recreational, cultural, educational or wellness activities. Of these 62 projects, 23 were previously funded while 39 were new short term projects. As one of the four departments pooling funds for the program, Social Services contributed funding for 48 of these projects where the focus was family violence prevention or other prevention services. Social Services' contribution was $750,000 out of a $1.4 million budget.

Examples of funded activities include:

- Parenting education and support programs in Regina, Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Swift Current, and LaLoche as well as Family Resource Centres located in Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Kamsack, and Sturgis. They provide a range of services that support families in raising children and promote positive child development.
- Family violence prevention and outreach services in the Battlefords, Regina, La Loche and Spiritwood.
- Youth-focused services and programs in La Ronge, Regina, Uranium City, Creighton, Stanley Mission, Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows and Cabri promote positive lifestyles, pro-social behaviour and continuing in school.
- Supports in Regina and Yorkton focused on supporting young children and their families in dealing with challenging behaviours and promoting child development.

Parenting Education

Parents and families play the primary role in children's lives, and a nurturing, supportive family is the best foundation for good child development. Activities which facilitated increased access to parenting education included Parenting Education Saskatchewan and the Nobody's Perfect Parenting Education Program.

Parenting Education Saskatchewan, administered through Family Service Saskatchewan, provided information, support and consultation about parenting education to community members and groups. The project was jointly funded through the Departments of Health and Social Services. Activities included maintaining the Parenting Education Directory on a web site; distribution three times a year of *Parenting Education News* to approximately 850 community members and agencies, and organizing a provincial conference.

The Department also supported the Nobody's Perfect Parenting (NPP) Education Program for parents of children aged 0 to 5 years. This program offers training and support to low-income families who are young, single, and socially or geographically isolated. The program is co-ordinated on a provincial basis through the Saskatchewan Institute on Prevention of Handicaps.

Teen and Young Parent Program

The Teen and Young Parent program offers early childhood intervention to at-risk families with children up to five years of age. Services are provided by 18 Department staff and 13 community-based organizations to parents who become involved in the program both before and after birth. Participation in the program is voluntary. Activities involved in the program include:

- pregnancy counselling;
- assessing parenting capacity and providing support to parents with young children;
- life-skills management including counselling support to develop problem-solving skills, self-esteem and peer/family support;
- education and vocational counselling;
- emphasis on healthy child development and accessing resources to ensure optimal child development;

- adoption planning, placement services and post-placement support.

The Department provides services to about 400 teen and young parent cases at any given time. With more individuals choosing to parent, the focus has shifted to intensive parenting support for families living in complex life situations. There has also been a trend towards increasing inter-generational family involvement, case complexity and higher risk factors.

Additional numbers of teen and young parents receive services on a one-to-one and group basis through community-based organizations.

Child Welfare

New Directions in Child Welfare

In many jurisdictions in North America, child welfare services are being reviewed and/or redesigned.

Saskatchewan is taking a comprehensive approach that fits with the Department's strategic direction as well as redesign planning in Income Security and Youth Services. It is a planned, inclusive process that will take several years to fully implement.

The new direction is based on three principles:

- family is the primary influence on the growth and development of children;
- government as parent has a responsibility to focus not only on ensuring quality care for children and youth, but on permanency as well; and
- shared ownership and community participation in every aspect of the design and delivery of child welfare services is critical.

The goals for the new direction in child welfare are:

- to provide high quality care for children and youth in the care of the Minister;
- to support the community to provide services for families with high needs to prevent the need for child welfare services;
- to provide services that increase the capacity of families to safely care for their children at home;
- to provide permanent families for children and youth who cannot return home and prepare them for independence;
- to work with First Nations and Métis people to provide culturally appropriate programs and services;
- to encourage and support community involvement in and ownership of programs and services for vulnerable children and youth; and
- to develop and report on accountability measures for child welfare services.

This past year, the Department has worked in consultation with the Child Welfare League of America, front-line staff and other key stakeholders in formulating a strategic approach to redesign of services. A paper outlining new directions was shared with staff, partners and key stakeholders.

A conference was held with child welfare staff in November 2000 to gather feedback on the strategy. A Child Welfare Reference Committee formed to advise on the redesign, met twice. Work plans are being developed with the regions to sequence and phase the redesign work in a planned and thoughtful way.

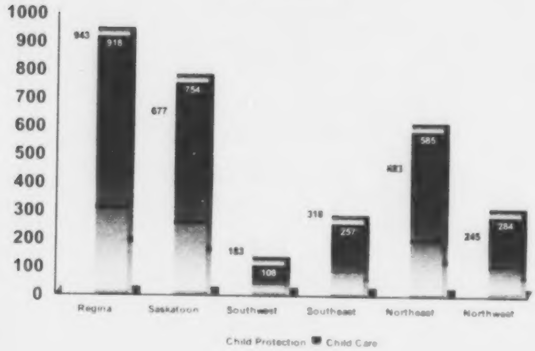
In the coming year, the Division will be consulting with the community to further shape the new direction in child welfare.

Child Protection Services

Child protection services promote the safety and well-being of children. Under the authority of *The Child and Family Services Act*, child protection workers investigate reports of child abuse and neglect. Following an investigation, the caseworker assesses whether the child is in need of protection. If there appears to be no serious or immediate risk to the safety of the child but the family does require support services such as counselling, the appropriate arrangements are made.

The approach is to preserve families while ensuring child safety. If children cannot safely remain with their families, parents may sign a voluntary agreement to place children in the Department's care. Where a voluntary agreement is not an option, children can be removed from their parent's care. These situations are taken to Family Court where a judge hears the information and makes a ruling.

Child Protection and Child Care Cases by Region March, 2001



In Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert, emergency services are provided after regular business hours by mobile crisis response agencies in the community. In most other areas, this service is provided by Departmental staff and the RCMP.

Investigations of child physical and sexual abuse are co-ordinated with local police. The Provincial Child Abuse Protocol describes the roles and responsibilities of the professionals who are involved in these investigations.

In 2000-2001, 5,120 cases were investigated by the Division for child protection concerns. Physical neglect and the need for family support are the most frequent causes of child protection involvement. Services to support families to prevent out-of-home placements are provided where it is safe for the child to remain at home or when such services would facilitate the child's return home. The primary service is in-home support provided through community-based organizations. Other services that families can receive include counselling, support from elders, participation in parenting classes and services that promote child development. In 2000-2001, the amount spent through the CBO sector to provide such services was $1,488,340.

Services to Children in Care

Children come into the care of the Minister under the authority of *The Child and Family Services Act* either through a voluntary agreement between the Department and the parents, or by an order of the Court. Support services are then provided to the child's family so the child can eventually return home.

Until it is safe for the child to return home, Social Services provides a foster home or other residential placement that will best meet the needs of the child. Wherever possible, placements with extended family or within the child's cultural community are sought first in order to maintain family and cultural connections. Some children may be placed in a group home or residential treatment setting, depending on their needs.

Placement with extended family (referred to as kinship care) is the preferred alternative for children who must be admitted to care. These placements have been growing steadily over the past few years. During 1998-1999 a monthly average of 398 children were placed with their extended family. This increased to a monthly average of 491 in 1999-2000 and to 538 in 2000-2001.

As of March 31, 2001, there were 2,906 children in the care of the Minister; 879 of these children were in short-term care; 826 children were in care through a voluntary agreement with their parents; and 1,201 children were long term or permanent wards.

Children in Care - March 31, 2001

Apprehended: matter before the court	692
Section 9: voluntary agreement with parents for care	826
Temporary Wards: committed to care for six months or less - Section 37(1)	187
Permanent Wards: committed to care until age of majority	429
Long-term Care Orders: same as Permanent Ward but not available for adoption	705
Section 56: agreement for service for previous ward 18 to 21 years of age, to continue education plans	67
Total	**2,906**

The annual average daily count (ADC) of children in care over the year 2000-2001 was 2,282. The annual average daily cost per case was $27.19, just seven cents over last year.

The majority of children remain in care for brief periods of time before returning to their immediate or extended family or cultural community. Over 80 per cent of children leave care within one year of entering, most within six months.

Unfortunately some children are unable to return to their families. In these circumstances the child may be permanently committed to the

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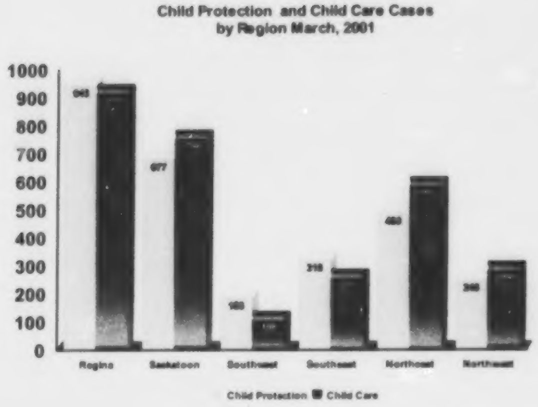

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Unfortunately some children are unable to return to their families. In these circumstances the child may be permanently committed to the

Minister through voluntary committal or court order (permanent committal). If by reason of age or other circumstances it is unlikely that an adoption plan would be made if the child were permanently committed to the Minister, the court may make an order that the child be placed in the custody of the Minister until the child attains the age of 18 years (long-term wardship). Youth who are in the Minister's care with either permanent or long-term wardship status at 18 years of age may enter into an agreement where the Minister continues to extend support in order for the young persons to continue their education up to age 21. Wards in permanent or long-term care or who are receiving extended support represent about 35 per cent of the total number of children in care.

Foster Care

The majority of children in the care of the Department live in foster homes. Foster care is provided by families in the community. Foster families must successfully complete a thorough home review. Once approved, foster families must complete 40 hours of training related to the special needs of children in care and their families. Foster families come from all walks of life, and a variety of cultural, educational and economic backgrounds.

As of March 31, 2001, there were 845 foster families in the province. There are four types of foster homes:

- Emergency Foster Homes are families who are prepared to accept children on short notice until another foster family placement can be found that more closely matches the child's needs.
- Short-term Foster Homes are families who are prepared to accept children who will be in care briefly until the child can be returned to their family or extended family.
- Long-term Foster Homes are families who open their homes to a child who is not likely to reunite with their immediate or extended family or who require extended care. For some children this may require care until they are ready for independent living.
- Therapeutic Foster Homes are families who provide intensive guidance, assistance and intervention for children with high behavioural, social, developmental and emotional needs.

The Department continues to emphasize support to children in foster home care. Although the number of foster homes remains relatively stable, there continues to be a shortage of homes in some areas of the province and for some children with special needs. It is important that foster homes selected for children are matched to meet the unique needs of the child. The foster home should also be in close proximity to the child's family and have a similar cultural background. A majority of the children in care are Aboriginal. There is a shortage of First Nations and Métis foster homes.

Residential Private Treatment

Children and youth who have histories of severe neglect, abuse and victimization may require highly specialized residential care and treatment services to help resolve a wide range of personal and family-related problems. Ranch Ehrlo Society and the Prince Albert Grand Council Child Care and Education Centre offer individualized therapeutic programs for high needs young people, on-site special educational services, and opportunities to successfully reconnect with their families and community.

The 2000-2001 budget provided a $311,000 increase for residential private treatment services for high risk children and youth. The increase brought the provincial private treatment budget to $4.76 M, purchasing nearly 55 annualized spaces.

Group Homes

The Department operates four therapeutic group homes, each uniquely designed to accommodate four exceptional needs children and youth. The homes are located in Regina, Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Denholm and are situated in these communities to provide a local family-centred treatment resource for high risk young people. Therapeutic group homes are staffed by professionally qualified social workers, and, where appropriate, parents/guardians and family members are actively engaged in the treatment process with their child.

The Department provides grant funding to community-based organizations in various communities throughout the province to operate 11 adolescent group homes for troubled youth. These local group living resources typically serve older adolescents, 12 - 17 years of age, who may be more inclined to accept and benefit from a group living situation rather than living with an alternate foster family. The homes are licensed on an annual basis under the authority of *The Residential Services Act*. Some group homes are licensed to accommodate a limited number of open custody placements under the *Young Offenders Act*. The 2000-2001 budget supporting the operation of non-government group home programs was over $3.7M.

Update to plans for 2000-2001

With the high proportion of First Nations and Métis children and youth in care, the department acknowledges the need to increase the representation of these cultural groups in our foster care system.

The department and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association developed a joint work plan identifying the support of First Nations and Métis foster families as a priority.

The regional office in North Battleford has developed a partnership with the Fort Battleford Urban and Métis Development Corporation. One of the goals of the partnership was to work together to recruit and train Métis foster families. This partnership has had some success and may be a model for further development in other regional offices.

Key Trends

The number of children who are placed with extended family as an alternative to foster care has increased steadily from almost 300 average daily placements in 1997-98 to 547 average daily placements in 2000/01. This is consistent with the Department's approach to provide family centered services.

Plans for 2001-2002

1. A Family Reunification pilot started in one region in December 2000. Family reunification is an intensive in-home service which allows for an early discharge of children from Departmental care.

   This pilot will have a six month evaluation to assess progress in implementation.

   A further evaluation is planned for 2002-2003 for initial outcomes such as:

   - number of 6 to 11 year olds reunified with family;
   - level of integrated planning - establishment and use of an advisory committee; and
   - client satisfaction.

   A three to four year long-term evaluation is planned to determine:

   - number of children living safely with family on a long-term basis;
   - number of 6 to 11 year olds involved in this program who were deterred from entry to the Young Offender system.

   A second program is being developed in a smaller, more rural office to begin in fall 2001. This program will adapt the Family Reunification services to a predominately rural setting and in relationship with local First Nations' agencies.

2. Improve transitional planning for children in long term and permanent care through legislation amendment, policy and practice changes.

3. Develop kinship care programming to increase extended family placements as an alternative to foster care.

4. To focus on development of program and policy that will assist and support children who are long term wards.

Youth In and from Care/Custody Network

The Saskatchewan YICCN office officially opened in May, 2000. The Saskatchewan office is part of the national program which seeks to serve the needs of children and youth currently or formerly involved in a foster care program.

Local youth in care network groups have been established in several locations including Regina, Yorkton/Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, Weyburn/Estevan, and Prince Albert.

Plans for 2001-2002

The Southeast region will be hosting their 2nd annual YICCN conference in April 2001.

A meeting/workshop for adult support persons to YICCN will be held in Davidson on April 4, 2001.

John Meston, one of the founders of the National Youth In Care Network, will share his experiences as a network support person. While another long-time network adult supporter, Del Williams, will share ideas about network development and youth leadership training and support.

The National YICCN office in Ottawa will be co-organizing a national conference with the

Saskatchewan Network office to be held at Blackstrap Lake near Saskatoon, July 3-8, 2001.

Adoption

Adoption is one of the cornerstones in the child welfare system's response to permanency planning for those children who are in permanent care of the Department. Adoption establishes a legal family relationship between adoptive parents and the child.

Adoption services are provided under the authority of *The Adoption Act*. The primary goal of the adoption program is to maintain a sufficient pool of approved adoptive families for children who are voluntarily committed or court ordered permanent wards of the Minister of Social Services for the purpose of adoption placement, including:

- facilitating the adoptions of children with special needs through expedited placement and assisted adoption;
- regulating international adoptions in accordance with *The Hague Convention*; and
- monitoring adoption applications under *The Adoption Act* to ensure that the best interests of children and the rights of all parties to adoption are taken into account.

During 2000-2001 a number of activities enhanced adoption services including:

- approval to proceed with the Post Adoption Computer Imaging System project. This project was initiated to provide a secure backup copy and on-line access for staff to adoption records that date back to 1920. There were 34,041 files scanned with a total of 1,886,497 pieces of paper imaged. Post adoption paper files have also been retained.
- in accordance with the principles of *The Hague Convention*, procedures have been developed regarding the preservation of children's information for those involved in intercountry adoptions with adoptive parents in Saskatchewan. For all intercountry adoptions, regardless of whether the order of adoption was obtained in Saskatchewan or in the country of origin, a file will be maintained for the child, preserving all the documentation pertaining to the adoption planning.

Intercountry adoption practices and standards are governed by *The Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Implementation Act* and *The Adoption Act* and regulations. This includes: sharing information with other Convention states, federal and provincial/territorial authorities and providing information regarding intercountry adoption to potential adoptive parents, adoptive parent groups, the broader adoption community and the general public; receiving, assessing and approving applications from Saskatchewan residents who plan to adopt a child who is not a resident of Canada; and in some cases providing parenting preparation and completing a written home study report. The Department of Social Services assists in arranging adoption placements and co-ordinating follow-up with the co-operation of the competent child welfare authorities in other countries. At the end of the fiscal year, 2000-2001, 98 intercountry applications were actively in process; this is a slight increase from the 76 intercountry applications that were in process as of March 31, 2000.

During 2000-2001, the post-adoption program arranged 176 reunions between adopted adults and their birth families, in addition to filling many requests for non-identifying information.

The Assisted Adoption Program provides financial and other supports if required to families who adopt children that have been designated for this service. The program is intended to support families who adopt children who are experiencing or are likely to experience serious emotional, behavioural, medical or cognitive difficulties. The Assisted Adoption Program has supported placement of children with significant needs with a permanent family.

Key Trends

The majority of birth parents participate in the adoption process which includes selecting the adoptive home, negotiating terms of future communications, and accepting openness in adoption by birth parents and adoptive parents. Of the approved adoptive homes, approximately 90 per cent are accepting of complete openness and communication with the parents of the infants and children they wish to adopt.

The majority of applications now involve countries which have ratified *The Hague Convention on The Protection of Children and Intercountry Adoption*. Since China signed *The Hague Convention* in November of 2000, the majority of intercountry adoption applications have been for children from China. Efforts are ongoing to develop and implement policy, standards and practices that reflect the Convention on intercountry adoption and the recommendations of the Special Commission held at the Hague, December 2000.

Planning for 2001-2002

Priority continues to be placed on: reviewing the Adoption regulations and harmonizing them with *The Adoption Act*; a review of post adoption and assisted adoption regulations, as well as linking the Regulations/Act together into the translated French version. The Adoption Services Manual is being revised to reflect policy revisions.

A review of the adoption program has begun with the intention of re-positioning the adoption program within a broader child welfare context. Over the next five years, it is anticipated that there will be changes to the program within the context of comprehensive service delivery for all permanency planning options and post care initiatives.

Youth Services

Support Program for 16 and 17 Year Old Youth

This program combines youth support and income security services for young people. It is linked to the outreach services component of the province's Children and Youth Exploited Through Prostitution Strategy and is effectively supporting youth to live in the community upon their release from custody. As well, the program provides general support services for youth at risk, especially for those youth who are new to the system. It is intended to provide support for the youth and their family with two objectives:

- prevent involvement as a young offender; and
- prevent involvement in social assistance as an adult.

Only youth who are not able to live at home because of family breakdown, rejection or abuse may receive financial support. Where safety is not an issue, family mediation and other program supports help youth and families to reconcile.

Case plans, developed by the youth with the help of staff, are designed to hold youth accountable and have them return home or achieve independence through participation in educational or vocational training or employment.

The support services to 16 and 17 Year Olds Program was implemented in 1995-1996. Program standards have continued to be developed to ensure consistent casework practice across the province.

Key Trends

Mediation services continue to be a key component of the program. This past year mediation services were used in 113 cases. When mediations are successful and youth are able to remain at home it helps prevent youth ending up on the streets where they may get involved in a range of negative behaviours and be at risk of abuse and exploitation. New inquiries are running at about the same average of 156 per month as last year.

Where a 16-17 year old youth is in need of care and supervision because there is no parent willing to assume responsibility or the youth cannot be re-established with his or her family, a voluntary agreement between the Department and the youth may be signed. This agreement which allows for residential and/or financial services is frequently called a "Section 10 " agreement based on the particular section of the legislation. The total number of youth on Section 10 agreements dropped to 315 across the province from an average of 337 last year. Expenditures in 2000-2001 were $2,325,548.

The stable numbers in this program have enabled the workers to continue to provide very supportive and effective interventions with youth and their families.

Continued work will be done with the provincial forum of program managers and supervisors responsible for the delivery of this program. In addition to addressing policy and program standard issues the work plan for each region will continue to be evaluated to ensure program expenditures fall within approved budgets. The data collection functions in the program have been automated and will continue to be further refined.

Update for plans in 2000-2001

During 2000-2001 the manual collection of statistics was converted to an automated system.

Members of the departmental supervisory group for the Support Services to 16/17 Year Olds program have been participating in the development of the Youth Transitions to Independence initiative, which will continue in 2001-2002.

Outcomes of plans for 2000-2001

The service delivery aspect of this program continues to be very strong. The number of youth accessing the program has remained relatively constant. The emphasis on providing mediation services at the point of intervention has continued to be one of the key components of the program. This past year mediation services were used in 113 cases.

Successful mediations result in youth being able to remain at home or return home sooner and helps prevent them from ending up on the streets.

Plans for 2001-2002

This program is expected to play an integral part in the recommendations of the *Special Committee to Prevent the Abuse and Exploitation of Children Through the Sex Trade* expected in late June 2001. Linkages with Income Security's new Youth Transitions to Independence initiative will continue to be developed.

The Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Through Prostitution

Social Services has continued to participate in an interdepartmental approach to this issue and has played a key role in further refining our strategic direction. Work has been pursued this year based on the following principles:

- involvement of children and youth in prostitution under the age of 18 years is sexual abuse of a minor;
- children and youth involved in prostitution are victims rather than offenders;
- pimps, perpetrators and others who exploit children and youth will be held accountable for their actions;
- case plans for children/youth involved in prostitution will be developed and will be individualized and culturally sensitive based on the holistic needs of the young person.

A working committee of Social Services and Justice representatives continues to work on this issue. These joint efforts have included:

- providing regular status reports to the Interdepartmental Child Abuse Steering Committee;
- meeting with representatives of the British Columbia Prostitution Unit;
- meeting with Cherry Kingsley, a consultant on Aboriginal youth issues. Her consultation resulted in a report called "Sacred Lives"; and
- consulting with local communities on implementation of the Provincial Policing Policy and the companion document from Social Services.

Work this year in the community has focused on the following areas:

- establishment of community networks to identify street youth who are then linked to current services;
- police, Social Services and community agencies effectively using legislation and developed resources;
- Social Services and the police partner to better serve the needs of children and youth who are being exploited through the sex trade;
- Operation Help seeing children and youth who are apprehended, brought to a circle of people who offer their support and assistance to the youth. The circle includes legal aid, elders and education representatives as well as police and Social Services; and
- preparation of a video "Lives Worth Living" targeted at preventing the recruitment of on-reserve Aboriginal children and youth into prostitution.

Update on plans for 2000-2001

In May 2000 several youth and outreach staff from across the province attended the highly successful Answers to Actions conference held in Edmonton. The input of these individuals was an important contribution to the conference.

In December 2000 the Minister attended the official premiere of the video "Lives Worth Living" produced for the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. This powerful video will be an important tool for showing young people the risks related to involvement in prostitution, and who they can talk to for support and direction.

The co-ordination of police and social services' efforts in the three major urban centres has improved over the year and some new initiatives such as Operation Help in Saskatoon, have further enhanced the response to children and youth exploited through prostitution.

The Department continued to monitor the hearings of the Special Committee throughout 2000-2001. Social Services is looking forward to reviewing the report and seeking community input into an action plan including a response to the report's recommendations.

Outcomes of plans for 2000-2001

- Services are taken to youth through timely and aggressive outreach. Established community networks are used to identify street youth who are then linked to current services.
- The police, Social Services and community agencies are effectively using legislation and the resources that have been developed to successfully intervene with children and youth.
- Social Services and the police have partnered to make the Provincial Policing policy work through integrated teamwork, including:
  - Prince Albert reports that it has very few children engaged in prostitution at this time. Police, Social Services and Outreach Services have developed a positive, integrated working relationship that has improved their response to the needs of children on the streets.
  - Regina Police Service and Social Services have greatly improved their communication around this issue and have worked together to conduct a number of successful sting operations over the past year.
  - Saskatoon Police and Social Services have strengthened their working relationship. They have developed a response model, called Operation Help, which sees children and youth who are apprehended in these circumstances brought to a circle of people who offer their support and assistance to the youth.

Plans for 2001-2002

The Special Committee is expected to table its report in the Legislature in the spring of 2001. In anticipation of the report, the following actions are contemplated:

- Meeting with representatives from Justice, Health, Education and Aboriginal Affairs to develop a co-ordinated response to the Special Committee's report.
- Initiating a process to develop a provincial strategic plan for high-needs children and youth who exhibit serious self harm or harm to others. The research phase is underway and should be complete in the summer of 2001.
- Exploring the possibility of developing a training program for police, designed to explore innovative approaches to reducing demand.

Young Offender Services

Services are provided under a youth model for youth in conflict with the law. This model recognizes that youth are different than adults, therefore different approaches and responses to their needs must be provided.

The youth model places primary value on public protection through:

- holding offenders accountable,
- supporting the participation of their parents,
- developing culturally-sensitive case plans,
- providing treatment based on individualized risk/need assessments, and
- building on skills and talents that will help youth move to responsible adulthood.

Services provided in the youth justice system are consistent with the *Young Offenders Act* (Canada) and include alternative measures and probation for non-violent youth who have had little involvement in the justice system. Community-based intensive supervision programs and custody are intended for the minority of offending youth who are violent and/or have serious repeat offending behaviours.

Development of a youth services strategy provides other options to address youth crime including reducing the incidence of court appearances. The strategy was prepared jointly with the Departments of Education, Health, and Justice, and established a policy framework for all the sectors to work towards the following key directions:

- more youth misconduct will be dealt with outside of the justice system, by providing more support to schools to address behaviour problems, and provide earlier intervention to troubled youth;
- contain the numbers of youth charged from coming to court and custody through improved screening, collaborative decision-making, and strengthening

community-based options for youth; and

- focus on better outcomes for youth, their families, victims of crime and communities. Examples of outcomes are more youth completing school, youth having safe places to live, youth having mental health, and alcohol and drug issues addressed, parents being supported in their roles, and victims having more opportunity to participate in youth justice processes. These outcomes will be achieved through more rehabilitative and reintegrative approaches.

The youth services model began as a pilot project in Regina and Prince Albert this year, and will operate for another two to five years. The pilots will be evaluated as part of the learning experience.

Coincident with the development of the youth services model, Social Services continues to consult with Saskatchewan Justice and Justice Canada on proposed federal legislation replacing the existing *Young Offenders Act*.

In February 2001 the Federal Minister of Justice re-introduced the proposed *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (Canada) in the House of Commons. The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* is a key element of the federal government's strategy to renew Canada's youth justice system. The policy direction of the new Act is consistent with the provincial youth services model to reduce the reliance on the youth justice system. In addition to the proposed legislative changes, there is new federal bridge funding available over the next five years for the development of youth justice programs and services that support the policy directions of the youth justice renewal initiative.

The Departments of Social Services, Justice, Health and Education are co-ordinating planning to implement the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

Community-Based Young Offenders Services

A number of community services are provided to youth who offend. Alternative measures hold youth accountable without court intervention. Youth may receive services while they wait for court (Judicial Interim Release). Supervision and monitoring services are provided for youth on probation and for youth returning from custody, while paying fines and completing restitution services in the community.

Alternative measures provides a way for youth involved in summary offences to deal with them outside the formal justice system. This is a preferable option for those youth who accept responsibility for their actions. The process involves a range of services which include formal cautioning, mediation and family group conferencing. The victim is able to participate in the process with apologies, restitution and healing as possible outcomes. The offender is connected in a tangible way to the offence and the victim, thereby having a significant impact on the future incidence of offending.

Alternative measures are delivered by community-based organizations (First Nations, Métis, and private agencies), service providers, and Social Services' employees. Alternative measures programming continues to be offered primarily by CBO's and First Nations, managing 85 per cent of referrals. Approximately 15 per cent of referrals are managed/delivered by Social Services. At the end of the 2000-2001 fiscal year there were 29 community-based organizations directly funded by Social Services for the provision of alternative measures at a cost of $1,042,807. Additionally, a number of agencies are contracted on a fee for service basis for the delivery of alternative measures.

The volume of referrals to the Alternative Measures Program this year throughout the province reached an all-time high of 3,139 cases, a ten per cent increase over last year's total of 2,800 referrals. Increased promotion, awareness, education and the development of new initiatives has led to an increasing number of cases. Between 85 and 90 per cent of these youth fulfil the conditions of the agreements developed to allow them to make amends to the victim and community for their offending behaviour.

The referral process throughout the province is being streamlined. Alternative Measures Co-ordinators were recruited in Prince Albert, North Battleford, Meadow Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Fort Qu'Appelle and Yorkton. A consultation process is being held in each of the regions to determine the need for additional standardization to the present system. The writing of a policies and procedures manual to address program issues has been undertaken as well.

The majority of young persons charged and sentenced serve their dispositions while remaining in the community.

Youth faced with more chronic and serious offences can still be dealt with in the community by an increased level of supervision through programs such as Intensive Supervision, Intensive Case Management, Family Preservation, and Judicial Interim Release (JIR). These programs provide intensive services, and co-ordinate the efforts of schools, mental health and alcohol and drug workers, and other involved services. The goal of the program is to develop youth strengths and skills, and reintegrate them with family, school and community in an overall effort to stop offending behaviour. The goal of the Intensive Case Management Program is to stop re-offending behaviour by providing high-risk youth with rehabilitative supports that stabilize them in the community.

In 2000-2001, 2,308 youth were supervised in the community, a drop of 100 cases over the previous year.

In 2000-2001, five First Nations cultural camps were funded by the Department and delivered by First Nations.

Key Trends

- The total number of youth supervised (in and out of custody) decreased from approximately 2,700 to approximately 2,600 by the end of 2000-2001.
- Aboriginal youth are over-represented in the youth justice system. Approximately 60 per cent of youth sentenced have Aboriginal ancestry.
- The capacity and effectiveness of alternative measures services are continuing to develop. First Nations organizations are participating in the delivery of this program, and in a number of skills development and cultural camps. Aboriginal service delivery more effectively helps young people to understand and take pride in their heritage, provides positive role modelling and addresses racial and trust issues.

Update to plans for 2000-2001

The Regina and Prince Albert Youth Services Model pilots are nearing the end of phase one.

Community organizations and members, including Aboriginal and youth members have participated in the identification of service issues and priorities, and worked to develop community-involved solutions.

Leaders from communities are working with government departments to refine plans, address policy issues and align resources, necessary to implement services over the next two to four years.

Social Services, along with the Departments of Justice, Education and Health, have formed a number of interdepartmental working committees to prepare for implementation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) which could be proclaimed as early as April 1, 2002. A working committee on extrajudicial measures (alternative measures) has completed a series of regional consultations and is in the process of identifying program changes required to implement the YCJA.

Saskatchewan has concluded a new five-year cost-sharing agreement with the federal government. The agreement introduces a new formula for cost sharing youth justice services and a bridge funding component that will assist the province in developing new high priority programs that support the policy objectives of the YCJA and the provincial Youth Services Model.

Program outcomes during 2000-2001

There was a significant increase in the volume of alternative measures referrals. The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics reports that the numbers of charges stayed or dismissed increased by 115 per cent during 1999-2000. The majority of these cases were referrals to post charge alternative measures indicating that there was an increased number of youth being dealt with outside of the justice system.

The increase in alternative measures has served to reduce the number of cases active in Community Youth Services (probation). This in turn has translated into increased service capacity due to lower caseloads.

There has been an increase in the number of youth being dealt with through Intensive Case Management and Judicial Interim Release. These programs offer intensive services in the community as an alternative to custody.

Some common client outcome themes from the Regina and Prince Albert Youth Services Model pilot sites include:

- more youth staying in and completing school;
- more youth misconduct dealt with outside the courts;
- earlier and family treatment for high risk youth and families;
- older youth placed in jobs and earning post secondary credits; and
- improved access to recreation and leisure services for high-risk youth.

Implementation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* is guided by the policy direction of the Youth Services Model approved by Cabinet in May 2000. While there are a number of youth justice processes that will be required by the new legislation the focus of implementation activities and program development is on advancing the outcomes articulated in the Youth Services Model policy framework.

The policy direction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* is consistent with the Youth Services Model and is being supported by federal bridge funding for programs that support the common policy direction.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Pilots are underway to demonstrate the interdepartmental youth services model intended to contain or reduce the number of youth charged, coming to court and sentenced to custody.
- Regina and Prince Albert regions are studying the effectiveness of services, gaps and issues.
- A standardized risk, needs and strengths assessment package is being developed. This package will assist with decisions about:
  - which youth may be diverted from the youth justice system,
  - better information to the courts about youth being sentenced and released from custody, and
  - matching youth with programs and services.
- Field testing and standard development for the assessment instrument will take place in the 2001-02 fiscal year.
- A training curriculum and standards for use are being developed and a field test will occur in the fall of 2001. Full implementation will occur in 2002.

The Division will work towards full implementation of the Federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. The departments of Justice, Social Services, Health and Education will undertake a full analysis of the act, examine implications for the existing system and make decisions around program requirements.

Young Offenders — Custody Options

The *Young Offenders Act* (Canada), provides that youth may be sentenced to a period of open or secure custody, or detained in remand while awaiting a court hearing. Remand is provided as part of the secure custody program. The overall custody expenditure for the year was $29,897,873.

Young Offender Facilities include:

- Paul Dojack Youth Centre, Regina
- Echo Valley Youth Centre
- North Battleford Youth Centre, North Battleford
- Kilburn Hall, Saskatoon
- Nisbet Youth Centre, Prince Albert
- Orcadia Youth Residence, Yorkton
- Prince Albert Correctional Centre, Unit #4, Prince Albert
- Yarrow Youth Farm, Saskatoon
- Drumming Hill Youth Centre Sweet Grass Reserve, North Battleford
- Kenosee Youth Camp, Carlyle
- Prince Albert Youth Residence, Prince Albert
- Salvation Army House of Concord, Regina (CBO)

Overall custody counts (open custody, secure custody, remand) averaged 339 per day, down approximately 3.5 per cent from the previous average of 351 in 1999-2000. For the second year in a row open custody declined significantly from an average daily count of 121 in 1999-2000 to 100 in 2000-2001. Secure custody was virtually unchanged while remand numbers averaged 79 compared to 69 last year.

Secure Custody

The Secure Custody Program provides a residential option to the Youth Court when it is determined that a youth presents a significant risk to the safety of the community and should have his or her access to the community restricted or removed for a period of time.

Youth who receive a secure custody disposition have limited opportunity to take part in activities in the community. They must earn the privilege of going on outings and when they do go, they are closely supervised. Education, job training, counselling and guidance are provided mainly within the facility.

Custody facilities work with residents to address their developmental needs as growing teenagers, and any special needs relating to the nature of their offending behaviour. In keeping with the requirements of the *Young Offenders Act* (Canada), all programming is conducted with the purpose of preparing each youth for their return to the community. Within the context of the youth services model, secure custody facilities are developing processes to better connect with other government departments, outside agencies and communities. Such connections are essential to form partnerships to facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth.

A small number of youth are currently screened into community based work training programs. These programs are the result of partnerships formed between a custody facility and local employers. In these programs, youth learn vocational skills through actual on-the-job experience. The youth continue to reside in the facility, but go to work each day in the community. These programs are closely monitored and supported by facility staff and employers.

The Secure Custody Program is located in three major facilities (Paul Dojack Youth Centre in Regina, Kilburn Hall Youth Centre in Saskatoon, and the North Battleford Youth Centre) as well as four satellite contingency programs. They are designed to contain youth within a supportive, developmental, closely supervised and controlled environment.

Two specialized units are being piloted at Paul Dojack Youth Centre in Regina and Kilburn Hall in Saskatoon. These units address the needs of a small group of youth who, because of their high risk and/or violent behaviour, need to be removed from the general population for a period of time. These youth are stabilized in the units and return to regular programming.

Open Custody

Open custody is used when a Youth Court Judge decides the youth presents little risk to the safety of the community. The Open Custody Program provides supervised, community-based residential spaces for youth ordered by the Youth Court to a period of open custody.

There are ten open custody facilities in Saskatchewan. Additional spaces are provided through the Community Homes Program. The Community Homes Program is a network of private treatment homes that have been designated as places of open custody. Twenty-two homes are located in cities, six homes on farms and seven homes on First Nation reserves.

In the Open Custody Program, youth live in a supervised, residential environment. While in open custody, they participate in community-based treatment and recreation programs and complete required community-service obligations. They are also expected to attend school and are provided with help to find local employment.

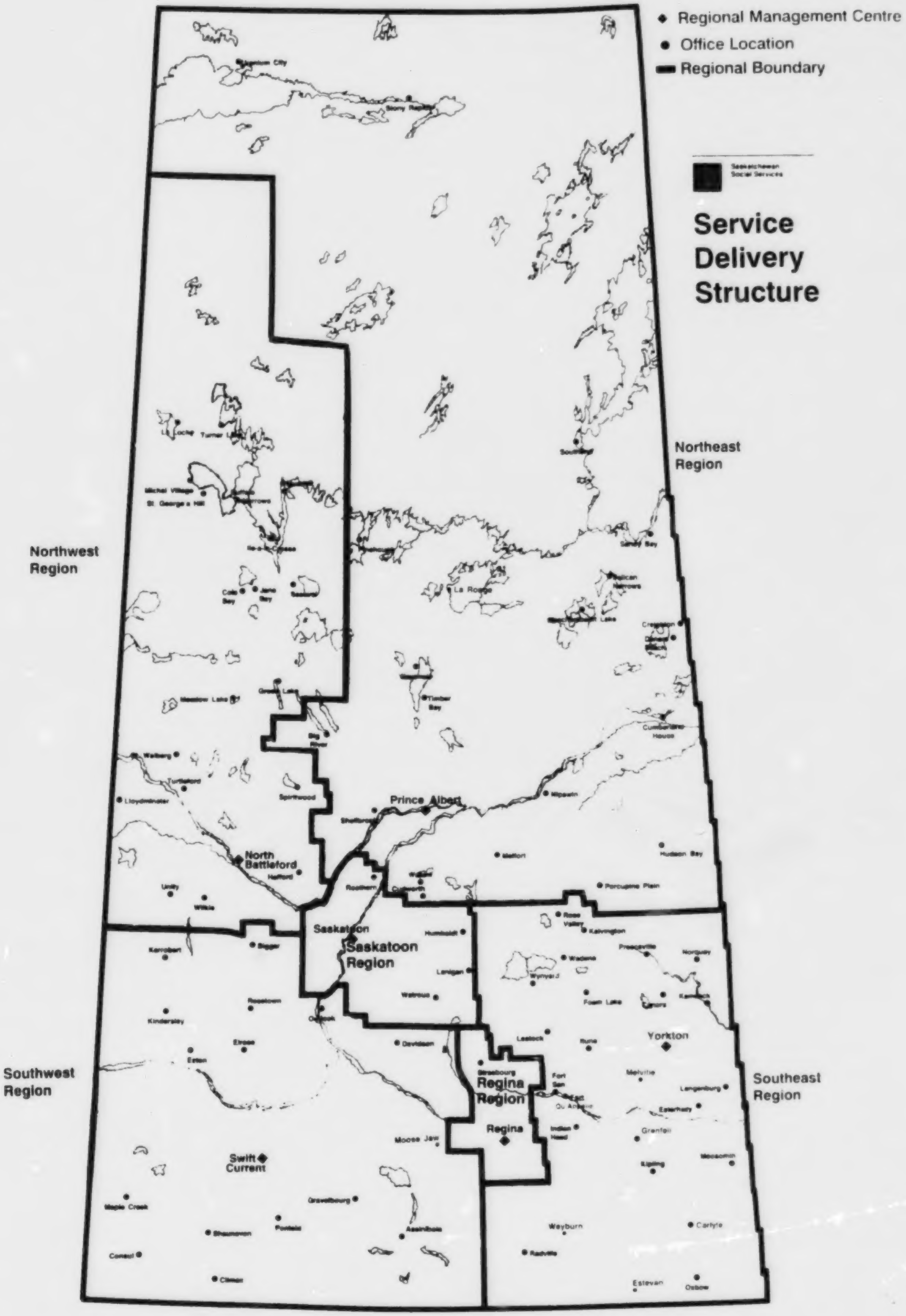
Update on plans for 2000-2001

Construction of the new Drumming Hill facility in North Battleford began in February of 2001 and is expected to be completed in October 2001.

Plans and Development for 2001-2002

- Custody facility directors and Community Youth Services representatives have begun a strategic planning process. This process is framed by the Youth Services Model and is intended to respond to the upcoming proposed *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- Program and policy development required to implement the Youth Criminal Justice Act.
- Completion of the strategic planning process through consultations with facility staff, youth, families, other agencies and communities.
- Development of a five year plan for residential requirements for offending youth.

Service Delivery Structure


◆ Regional Management Centre
● Office Location
▬ Regional Boundary
Saskatchewan Social Services
Northwest Region
Northeast Region
Saskatoon Region
Regina Region
Southwest Region
Southeast Region
Uranium City
Stony Rapids
La Loche
Turnor Lake
Michel Village
St. George's Hill
Ile-a-la-Crosse
Cole Bay
Jans Bay
Beauval
Meadow Lake
Green Lake
Big River
Timber Bay
La Ronge
Southend
Sandy Bay
Pelican Narrows
Creighton
Cumberland House
Turtleford
Lloydminster
Spiritwood
Prince Albert
Shellbrook
Nipawin
Melfort
Hudson Bay
North Battleford
Hafford
Unity
Wilkie
Rosthern
Wakaw
Cudworth
Porcupine Plain
Rose Valley
Kelvington
Preeceville
Norquay
Wadena
Wynyard
Foam Lake
Canora
Kamsack
Saskatoon
Humboldt
Lanigan
Watrous
Kerrobert
Biggar
Rosetown
Kindersley
Outlook
Elrose
Eston
Davidson
Lestock
Yorkton
Strasbourg
Fort San
Fort Qu'Appelle
Melville
Langenburg
Esterhazy
Regina
Indian Head
Grenfell
Kipling
Moosomin
Moose Jaw
Swift Current
Maple Creek
Gravelbourg
Assiniboia
Shaunavon
Ponteix
Consul
Climax
Weyburn
Radville
Carlyle
Estevan
Oxbow

Regional Operations

Regional Service System

The majority of Social Services' programs are delivered locally across the province, in six regions. Regina and Saskatoon regions serve the two major urban centres and immediate vicinities. Northeast (Prince Albert head office), Northwest (North Battleford), Southeast (Yorkton) and Southwest (Swift Current) deliver their services from their regional head office and a number of service centres in each region.

The regions allow the Department to serve its clients and provide its services in a manner that is as responsive as possible to local conditions.

Regional Programs

Each regional office and each service centre provides a full range of services and activities which support the mandated programs. These include:

Income Security

This offers a variety of programs which provide financial assistance to low income individuals and families, particularly those who are not working. A full explanation of these programs is in the Income Security section of this report. In the regions, the programs that are available to the public as follows:

- income security intake — initial interviews and eligibility assessments of new Income Security clients;
- income security maintenance — ongoing administration of income security benefits, adjustment of eligibility, counselling, referrals, case planning for clients; and
- verification unit — investigation and verification of information provided by clients, referrals from workers, referrals to police as required.

Child Welfare

This includes child protection, foster care, adoption and a number of related specialty programs. They are more fully described in the Family and Youth section of this report. In the regions, these services are delivered as follows:

- Child protection — investigation and risk assessment of situations reported as children in need of protection. Where it is believed that abuse or neglect has occurred, the child protection investigation is jointly undertaken with the appropriate local police authority. Ongoing case planning and case management with client families may include short or long term involvement with the Department.
- Children in Care Services — after a child protection investigation, if children are unable to remain with their families, pending changes in the family situation, arrangements are made for the children to be placed in alternate resources such as extended family, other care providers known to the family, with foster families recruited by the Department, or some other residential placement.
- Family Connections — consultation and liaison services between Departmental staff and First Nations, and long term planning and reunification work for Aboriginal children in care.
- Resource Services — staff recruit new foster home resources, conduct initial and ongoing training, conduct annual reviews of foster homes.
- Adoption — staff help families who may wish to adopt children as well as provide adoption, post adoption and international adoption services.
- Teen and Young Parent — staff provide counselling and support to young high-risk parents and their children.
- 16-17 year old program — as a program alternative to Income Security, provides assessment and case management services to youth who require out of home residential services or mediation and support services to live at home.
- Specialized Resource Services — responsible for recruitment, training and support of a variety of specialized residential resources for children and youth (open custody homes, sexual offender homes, therapeutic foster homes, etc.)

Residential programs

These vary by region, but offer specialized therapeutic, assessment and stabilization services to high-risk children and youth. They will be described in each regional report, and in the Family and Youth section of this annual report.

Young Offender programs

- Community programs and alternative to custody measures for youth in conflict with the law.
- Open custody young offender facilities, providing residential services to youth in conflict with the law who have been sentenced to custody.

See also the Family and Youth section for a more complete description, and for a report on the closed custody programs.

Community Development, Outreach and Partnership

- Community development and outreach, based on the specific needs of individual communities.
- Managing contracts with community-based organizations to deliver a number of supplemental services to Family and Youth Services. Each region works closely with First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies, which provide on-reserve child welfare services.

Day Care and Community Living staff provide these services in conjunction with central office.

Administrative support

Providing office support and administration services for all programs delivered in each of the offices, including budget, training, information and technology systems, human resources, transportation and so forth.

Budget and Staff, Regional Services

Total expenditures on programs delivered regionally were $361.1 million, of the Department's $575.3 million. During the year, a total of 978.2 Full Time Equivalent employees (FTE's) provided services to our clients in the regions, out of the Departmental total of 2,345.9 FTE's.

Regional offices had a total expenditure of $50.6 million which covered the salaries of staff and all administrative costs for telephones, travel, office equipment, supplies and so forth.

Regional Operations

Services are provided by staff in or from Service Centre offices, sub-offices and day offices located throughout the province. Supplementary services are provided on contract by community-based organizations with support from staff in the Service Centres. The Service Center Managers are responsible for the administration and delivery of all Department programs and services provided in the service area. These positions report to the Regional Director.

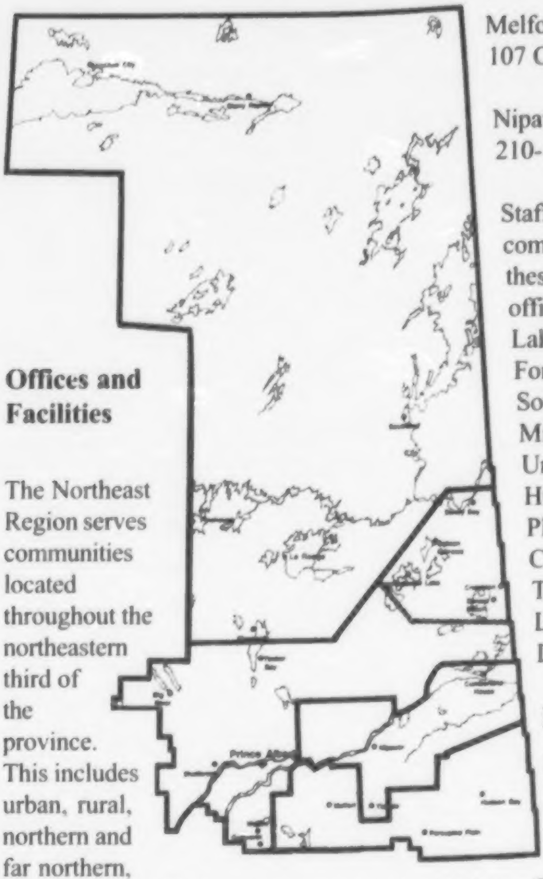
Human Services Integration Forum

All Regional Directors have played an increasing role in the Regional Intersectoral Committees (RIC's), which attempt to co-ordinate human services in the regions. The RIC's are usually composed of provincial government representatives (Social Services, Health, Education, Justice), local government representatives (health districts, school districts, police), and in some areas community-based organizations (CBO's). Most Regional Directors serve as chairs, or co-chairs of these groups.

The work of these committees varies widely throughout the province but all committees are supported by full time co-ordinators, and serve as the local expression of government's wish to better integrate services.

Most local committees now include a broad range of representatives of various agencies and authorities in addition to provincial government departments. Improved collective strategic planning and a number of new interagency initiatives have resulted from this activity. In addition, most regional offices participate in a range of interagency committees which have been established for some time, including child abuse education committees, child abuse protocol committees, special residential placement approval committees, Children's Action Plan Committees etc.

Northeast Region



Offices and Facilities

The Northeast Region serves communities located throughout the northeastern third of the province. This includes urban, rural, northern and far northern, Métis and First Nations communities. The economy is diverse and includes farming, hunting, fishing, forestry, tourism, mining, industry and business.

Offices:

Prince Albert Service Centre:
McIntosh Mall
800 Central Avenue

West Flat Community Centre,
1350 - 15th Avenue West

Creighton Office
298 - 1st Street East

La Ronge Service Centre,
1320 La Ronge Avenue

Melfort Service Centre,
107 Crawford Avenue East

Nipawin Service Centre,
210-1st Street East

Staff serve the rural communities surrounding these centers through day offices in Sandy Bay, Black Lake, Camsell Portage, Fond-Du-Lac, Pinehouse, Southend-Brabant, Stanley Mission, Stoney Rapids, Uranium City, Weyakwin, Hudson Bay, Porcupine Plain, Carrot River, Cumberland House, Tisdale, Big River, Blaine Lake, Debden, Duck Lake, Leask, and Wakaw.

Facilities:

Prince Albert Therapeutic Group Home — 4 bed residential treatment program for 12 to 16 year old boys.

Northeast Young Offender Custody Facilities

Prince Albert Youth Residence and Sharber Unit — 32 bed open custody for boys

Nisbet Youth Centre — 16 bed secure custody facility for boys

NorSask Youth Unit — 20 bed secure custody for 16 and 17 year old boys, administered by the Prince Albert Correctional Centre

Operational First Nations Agencies and Associated Bands:

Agency Chiefs Child and Family Services, Spiritwood

Ahtahkakoop Child and Family Services Inc., Prince Albert

Kanaweyihimitowin Child and Family Services Inc., Prince Albert

Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services, La Ronge

Montreal Lake Child and Family Services, Prince Albert

Nehiyaw Awasis Siceca Cistinna Child and Family Services Inc. (NASC), Prince Albert

Peter Ballantyne Child and Family Services, Prince Albert

Saskatoon Tribal Council Family Services Inc., Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yorkton

Yuthe Dene Sekwi Chu L A Koe Betsedi Inc., La Ronge

Caseload and Service Activities

Please see the summary table at the end of the regional section for budget, staffing, caseloads and service activities for:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Children's Service Caseload
- Child Protection Caseload
- Foster Homes
- Young Offenders
- Adoption Caseload
- Teen and Young Parent Caseload
- Community Living

Regional Developments and Key Issues

Financial Services

The Minister's announcement in December 2000 of Income Security Redesign informed the public of the considerable staff committee work and consultation with community partners in moving the program in a positive direction. This gave impetus to our service delivery to incorporate incremental policy changes while continuing to provide solid work with clients who remain on assistance.

Staff have taken a very active role with community partners in the area of homelessness. Specific initiatives are underway to improve the quality and accessibility of homes for low income citizens in Nipawin and Prince Albert.

Budget counselling programs coupled with other services such as Food Co-ops and Collective Kitchens are seeing success in some of our communities. New programs were launched this year in both Tisdale and Melfort and have been tackling issues of money management, nutrition and group support activities among low income persons.

Family Services

The year 2000-01 was a busy year for the Northeast Region. In preparation for and to facilitate changes as outlined in redesign of the child welfare program, a complete file review of all child care and protection files was undertaken. Emphasis was placed on complexity of cases, appropriate utilization of mandate, special needs utilization and an analysis of gaps in family support resources. The file review was completed along with individual reports for each service center. A regional report is near completion.

The Prince Albert office undertook two pilot projects. A reunification unit consisting of four workers and a supervisor was established. Family reunification is an intensive, targeted approach that combines the principles and beliefs of Family Centered Case Management and Inclusive Foster Care model to reunite and sustain children with their parents. The unit has been operating since November 1, 2000.

The second undertaking in the Prince Albert office was completing a developmental assessment on all long term and permanent wards. This was completed January 2001. This initiative will now be extended throughout the province. The information that is summarized using the assessment tool provides an immediate file reference to a child's needs and assists with case planning.

A total of nine First Nation Child and Family Services agencies continue to provide services to First Nation communities in the Northeast Region.

Community Youth Services

Youth Services staff continue to provide many services to the youth in our region. We continue to provide services to:

- youth with offending behaviours,
- 16/17 year olds who for a variety of reasons cannot live at home,
- youth who are in need of child welfare services,
- youth who are involved with prostitution and need a way out, and
- youth in custody.

Many of the services are mandated through the justice system. Government recognizes that too many youth are dealt with through the justice system, and therefore, the Youth Services Model was introduced in 2000. The model moves away from relying on the police and the courts to deal with our youth in the community using diversion, alternative measures, and a wraparound approach.

Prince Albert was chosen as a pilot site to implement the new services model. The pilot site has developed four major committees to develop a community action plan that will deal with offending youth differently.

The four committees are:

1. Legal Issues Committee
2. Education Committee
3. Vocation/Job Support Committee
4. Health Committee

Each committee reports to a Regional Steering Committee of the Youth Justice Committee. It is the community's sincere hope that by the fall of 2001, we will deliver services that will assist youth in making positive choices that will reduce offending behaviour.

In keeping with the new direction, community justice committees are established and operating in Nipawin and Tisdale. They provide alternative measure services to youth and other community members as well as public education.

The La Ronge office implemented a day program in partnership with the La Ronge First Nation. They experienced great success with more than 20 youth participating.

Residential Care

The Prince Albert Therapeutic Group Home continues to provide residential treatment for 12-16 year olds in close association with Prince Albert Mental Health and the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division Star Program.

An integrated assessment and stabilization unit at the Prince Albert Mental Health Centre continues to provide important services in partnerships with Saskatchewan Rivers School Division and Social Services. This program assists youth with mental health and behavioural issues to stabilize before they return to family or caregivers.

The Prince Albert Grand Council Child Care and Educational Centre continues to provide long term residential therapeutic care for children referred by both Social Services and First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies.

Northeast Young Offender Custody Facilities

The custody facilities had an active programming year. In partnership with Green Tree Fencing Supplies, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), Post Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST), Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), the northeast custody facilities have graduated 15 residents with certificates in vocational forestry.

The short order cooking program in partnership with SIAST is an active skill training program at the custody facilities.

The custody programming continues to include a wide variety of cultural experience for the youth. Youth have experienced a high quality of community cultural programming in conjunction with several elders, local First Nations, and PAGC.

Our educational liaison continues to access community school placements for open custody youth. At the Nisbet Centre, the Teacher Therapist continues to provide individualized educational programming for all students. Most of the Nisbet educational programming takes the form of life skills and trades training which helps ease youths' return to their home and communities.

For youth with short dispositions and who are unable to access vocational and school programs, the facilities provide a large range of community service projects. Seasonal activities such as snow shovelling for seniors and spring clean up in the community keep the youth busy.

Staff from the Prince Albert Health District and the facilities co-facilitate informational groups on chemical use/drug dependency. Where the need arises alcohol and drug assessments can be completed with youth at the facilities.

Community-Based Organizations

A total of 44 not-for-profit community organizations, municipal or Aboriginal governments received 87 Social Services grants totalling $9,100,690. They delivered a wide range of programs serving children and youth; people with disabilities; women and children seeking haven from family violence; parents who learned skills to enable them to provide appropriate care for their children; parents who learned budgeting skills; and children, youth and families in crisis.

Regional Intersectoral Committee Work (RIC)

Regional intersectoral work has expanded immensely. Because of its prominence and importance, new membership has been added to the three RIC's in the Northeast Region such as First Nations, Métis Nations, school divisions, health boards, recreation committees, RCMP, and Can-Sask Employment Centres.

In the north, the Human Services Partnership Forum (HSPF) covers the Northern Administration District of 320,000 square kilometres which is about 42.7 per cent of the land area of the province. The Partnership provides a forum for the planning and delivery of integrated human based services to northern people.

Significant work has been done to collaborate with the Northern Strategy which strengthens community and also builds community capacity. The detailed work plan and letters of understanding have been developed to ensure that all agencies promote and support each other's work.

Continued priorities are:

- community development - building community capacity in the north
- youth at risk
- early childhood development
- integrated case management (wraparound)
- citizens in vulnerable circumstances

The Northeast RIC serving Melfort, Nipawin, Tisdale, and Hudson Bay areas has been very active developing three intersectoral management districts using health district boundaries. Numerous children and youth projects from preschool, alternative school, housing, food security, wraparound training and many other initiatives were begun and/or supported during the past year. Another highlight was hosting the provincial Human Services Integration Forum in Melfort, October 24 - 25, 2000.

The Prince Albert RIC continues to support integrated initiatives related to the youth services model, family violence and homelessness. The RIC identified early childhood development as a priority and sponsored two research projects in 2000-2001. Understanding the Early Years is a five year, federally funded project that assesses children's readiness to learn at the kindergarten level. The project will provide the community with a wide range of information to build a community planning process with a view to improving the readiness to learn of its children.

Key Northern Initiative

Cumberland House and Beauval were the two chosen pilot communities to host the Community Reference Panels (CRP), in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities to advise Social Services on programs, policies and services, and to work towards community responses for the north. Both communities have been very successful in establishing the one year pilot and are building community capacity and solutions to respond to individual family and community needs.

The Northern Services' Working Group is charged with overseeing the CRP and is currently working at the evaluation process. The final report is anticipated in the fall of 2001.

Trends and Outcomes

The Northeast Region programs and service delivery embrace the Department's strategic direction and staff are working to meet these expectations.

Some trends in the year:

- Income Security caseload numbers have dropped in the Prince Albert area. There have been considerable retail store construction and expansion. This has provided local employment opportunities for many clients.
- The Young Offender pilot project continues to gather momentum among stakeholder agencies.
- The regional child protection caseloads showed a significant decrease permitting staff to work with more manageable caseloads. The thorough regional family services file review and the application of Family-Centred Case Management principles had a large bearing on this change.
- All three Regional Intersectoral Committees have been very active and gaining more momentum with time. The specific areas of housing, training and employment, early childhood development, and working with the schools will provide for an exciting and challenging year ahead.

Update on 2000-2001 Plans

- Family Centred Case Management training (FCCM) has continued to be a primary focus. This was followed by an extensive file review of the Family Service Program files using the FCCM principles which helped reinforce the training.
- A regional committee has been formed to utilize all ideas to develop strategies in Aboriginal foster home resources.
- A plan is being developed to analyze the family support program to increase opportunities for children to remain within the immediate or extended family network.
- A re-unification unit has been established and has moved from a pilot to permanent status within the Prince Albert office.
- A permanency planning project was completed in Prince Albert February, 2001. All permanent and long-term ward files were

reviewed and updated in the Prince Albert office. This review and updating will not be focused on the other offices in the region.

- Youth Pilot project update - please refer to "Community Youth Services" section in the report.
- The Northeast young offender facilities graduated 15 youth from the vocational forestry program offered in partnership with SIAST, Green Tree Fencing, Métis Urban Services, and Prince Albert Grand Council Urban Services.
- The Northeast young offender custody facilities graduated two youth from the short order cooking certificate program offered in partnership with SIAST.
- A Community Reference Panel (CRP) was established in Cumberland House October, 2000 on a one-year pilot project basis. The CRP will provide advice to Social Services on programs, policies, and services and to work towards community responses to meet local needs.
- The region has expanded its ongoing involvement with Canada- Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services, Regional Colleges, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, and other stakeholder agencies and community groups to assist clients to reach skill training and employment potential. We will continue to build the relationship and maximize the opportunities in the coming year.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Continue training and implementation of the Family Centred Case Management model of service delivery within the Income Security, Family and Youth Services program.
- Work with community partners to implement the findings in the homelessness surveys and to improve housing for low income citizens.
- Work closely with community and agency partners on the Regional Intersectoral Committees to implement Kids First (Early Childhood Development Program).
- Assist the education system community, and other stakeholders with the expansion of community schools in the region.
- Evaluate the Community Reference Panels in the North and work with Northern Services' Working Group and Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities on the findings.
- Expand the lifeskills and special skills training at the youth custody facilities with the partners of SIAST, Prince Albert Grand Council Urban Services, Métis Urban Services, Green Tree Fencing, and the educational system to equip youth for employment, community programs and for a reasonable return to the youth's home.
- Continue with Income Security Redesign especially in the joint planning initiatives with Can-Sask Career and Employment Services to assist clients to improve and participate in the labour market.
- Continue to develop the Youth Services Model so that it can be an efficient and effective service delivery model.
- Undertake consultations regarding Child Welfare Redesign.

Northwest Region

North Battleford

The Northwest Region covers a vast geographic area, spanning a populated region that runs from North Battleford (regional office location) to La Loche. The area has a diverse economic base, including forestry, farming, oil and a variety of manufacturing and processing plants. In the northern part of the Region, employment opportunities are more limited and unemployment is high.

Most agencies providing human services tend to be located within the larger centres, presenting rural and northern areas with the challenge of access to services. Travel and distance are barriers and often service responses must be created on an individual case basis drawing on the strengths of families and communities.

The Lloydminster Service Centre finds itself in the unique situation of sharing service provision in that border city with Alberta's Ribstone Child and Family Services Authority.

Offices:

Buffalo Narrows Service Centre
Box 220

La Loche Service Centre
Box 70

Lloydminster Service Centre
4815-50th St.

Meadow Lake Service Centre
Unit 5, 201 - 2nd St. W.

North Battleford Service Centre
405, 1146 - 102nd St.

Staff serve the rural communities surrounding these centres through day offices in Beauval, Ile a la Crosse, Michel Village, Patuanak, St. George's Hill, Turnor Lake, Maidstone, St. Walburg, Turtleford, Cole Bay, Green Lake, Jans Bay, Loon Lake, Pierceland, Glaslyn, Radisson, Spiritwood, Unity, and Wilkie.

Facilities:

Drumming Hill Youth Centre — 10 bed open custody Young Offender facility

Denholm Adolescent Treatment Group Home — 4 bed home for teenagers, located in Denholm, providing therapeutic intervention.

Operational First Nations Agencies and Associated Bands:

Agency Chiefs Child and Family Services, Spiritwood
BTC Human Services Corporation, North Battleford
Kanaweyimik Child and Family Services, North Battleford
Meadow Lake Tribal Council Health and Social Development Authority, Meadow Lake
Onion Lake Child and Family Services, Onion Lake

Caseloads and Service Activities

Please see the summary table at the end of the regional section for budget, staffing, caseloads and service activities for:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Children's Services Caseload
- Child Protection Caseload
- Foster Homes
- Young Offenders
- Adoption Caseload
- Teen and Young Parent Caseload
- Community Living

Community Based Organizations

Northwest Region has contracts and provides grants to many community-based organizations throughout the region. In 2000-01, 23 community-based organizations and First Nations communities received funding totalling $1.56 million to offer 28 community-based programs directed at families and youth. Ten grants were provided to school programs under the Child Nutrition and Development Program, and 17 Prevention and Support Grants were awarded to community based organizations, together totalling over $265,000.

Regional Development and Key Issues

Update on 2000-01 Plans:

- Entered into a partnership with Northwest Friendship Centre for the development of a network of family support workers to assist families and children in crisis in areas served by the Buffalo Narrows / La Loche Service Centre.

- Implemented a Community Reference Panel in Beauval, as a pilot site in conjunction with the Northern Services Working Group, as a source of advice to Departmental personnel on case, community and practice issues in this northern community.
- Continued with the collaborative efforts between the Ribstone Child and Family Services and the Lloydminster Service Centre to co-ordinate and streamline service delivery in the border city of Lloydminster.
- Expanded the partnership with Fort Battleford Urban Métis Development Corporation to include the joint recruitment and training of four Métis foster homes.
- Commenced construction on a new 14 bed open custody facility to replace the current Drumming Hill Youth Centre.
- Implemented an expanded and specialized community-based educational program for high risk youth, including youth in custody facilities, who otherwise may have had limited access to educational programming.

Aboriginal Child and Family Services

As one proceeds north throughout the region the proportion of the population of Aboriginal ancestry increases. The past seven years have seen the First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies become operational providing on-reserve child welfare services to 19 of the 20 First Nation communities within the region. These include Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Battlefords Tribal Council, Kanaweyimik, Onion Lake, and Agency Chiefs Child and Family Service agencies. The impact of their operations is felt within the service centres in preventing youth from becoming involved with the law, and through collaboration in child welfare case planning and the use of extended family as placements for children who cannot remain with parents for reasons of child abuse and neglect.

In the Battlefords, a partnership has been formed with Fort Battleford Urban Métis Development directed at the recruitment of Family and Youth Service providers and the provision of budgeting counselling and trusteeship services to financial assistance recipients. The relationship has been strengthened this past year with the development and implementation of foster care resources in the Métis community.

In the border city of Lloydminster, 2000-2001 saw advancement in plans regarding a joint children's services initiative directed at improved co-ordination of intake and referral processes, ongoing services and the sharing of access to local agency resources between the two provinces. This initiative will be housed in one location for easier client access.

Young Offender Community Programs

Throughout the region, a range of community-based alternative measures programs for young offenders has evolved as a result of partnerships with the RCMP and Prosecutions Branch of Saskatchewan Justice, as well as various community organizations. A network of Community Justice Committees are also active within various First Nations communities and support the delivery of alternative measures programming. Together, alternative measures programming and service providers assist in keeping low risk youth out of court and linking them with community supports.

Northern Community and Social Development Initiatives

As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between Social Services and the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities (SANC) which was signed in May, 1999 in response to the Report on the Northern Social Development Consultations (1998), a Community Reference Panel was formed in the community of Beauval. The Community Reference Panel provides guidance to Departmental staff on community and practice issues in northern communities. In 2000-2001, a co-ordinator was hired and the panel was oriented to the Department's strategic directions and programs. They also received training in the Wrap-Around Process for working with families. Their input and support in working with children and families in need of protection, as well as with youth, has already yielded very positive results. In addition, the Community Reference Panel will be involved in developing northern options for Income Security Redesign in 2001-2002.

Through another northern partnership, a network of family support workers has been recruited and trained to assist families and children in crises through the provision of in-home support services in the Buffalo Narrows and La Loche service area.

Integrated School Linked Program

In September 2000, through a partnership between the Department, Battlefords School Division, Northwest Catholic School Division and the Child and Youth Services Unit of the Battlefords Health District, an education-based multi-faceted program for at-risk youth was launched. Avalon, Phoenix and Manacowin Schools combine a special education academic approach with on-site social workers, an education liaison worker and a mental health worker using a variety of intervention techniques to enhance the student's likelihood of success in and out of the classroom.

Forest Fires

Unique to the region is the recurrence of seasonal forest fires, most significantly affecting the Buffalo Narrows, La Loche and Meadow Lake Service Centre areas where fires and the emergency sheltering and feeding of evacuees is most likely to occur. This is part of the Department's role in providing emergency social services in the province. 2000-2001 was a quiet year for forest fires; however, a great deal of planning was done for future events, including work with Saskatchewan Emergency Preparedness on the development of a Provincial Emergency Response Centre in the region (North Battleford).

Human Resources

As a primarily rural and northern region, recruitment and retention of social workers continues to be a challenge. A committee comprised of union and management has jointly explored options and proposed solutions which might assist in this regard. In the north, our greatest success has been with the recruitment of qualified northerners to vacant positions. In the southern part of the region, competition for recruitment with larger centres and First Nations Child and Family Services' agencies accounts for considerable staff turnover.

Outcomes

Northwest Region has achieved the following outcomes in the delivery of programs and services to clients:

- all open custody clients of the Drumming Hill Youth Centre had access to community-based educational programming using a multi-disciplinary team in a classroom setting;
- approximately 100 at-risk youth received home, school and community interdisciplinary support to achieve success in remaining in school;
- a decline of over 300 social assistance cases was witnessed due to increased employment opportunities, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, the Provincial Training Allowance, and phase one of Income Security Redesign;
- diversion from the court system through alternative measures referrals occurred for 184 youths in the North Battleford area;
- four Métis foster homes were recruited and trained through a social development pilot project with Fort Battleford Métis Development Corporation;
- an Early Childhood Development initiative commenced in 2000-01 in North Battleford which will see initiatives targeted at the prevention and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE); and
- since 1989, Territorial Youth Services has worked with over 700 youth raising approximately $40,000 in restitution for victims of crime and providing youth with the opportunity to complete over 12,000 hours of community service work.

Community and Interagency Partnerships

Interagency partnerships are critical to the operation of the region. A wide variety of interagency committees exists and range from those dealing with broad-based community human services issues and planning, to special project joint planning and management committees, and to integrated case management conferences.

Battlefords Health District

North Battleford Service Centre concluded its fourth year of a co-location project involving the Department's Community Youth Services and Battlefords Health District Child and Youth Services units. Housed in the city-owned Don Ross Centre, youth and their families are able to access services at a single location, and the two agencies are better able to co-ordinate services between them.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Effects (FAS/E)

Frequent themes of the many interagency partnerships include early childhood development, integrated school-linked services to at-risk children and youth, community-based approaches to youth in conflict with the law, family violence, poverty, literacy and services to children and families impacted by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Effects. Given the demographics of the region, focus is on enhanced working relationships, increased collaboration with and participation of Aboriginal human services providers in meeting our mandate.

Battlefords Tribal Council Family Health Centre

In partnership with the Battlefords Tribal Council and Battlefords Health District, Social Services staff are part of a team providing co-ordinated services in a clinic setting in the areas of child assessment, teen wellness/health, and teen and young parent programming.

Battlefords Tribal Council

Drumming Hill Youth Centre, through a partnership with Battlefords Tribal Council, has established cultural, spiritual and traditional programming for youth both within the facility and upon reintegration of the youth back into the community. Cultural Camps and Release Circles are just two examples of initiatives that have been started through this partnership.

Northwest Interagency Community Enhancement Committee

Northwest Interagency Community Enhancement Committee (Meadow Lake) formalized its partnerships between social services, education, the health district, RCMP, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, as well as community representatives from Loon Lake, Goodsoil and Pierceland. In addition to promoting interagency collaboration, this group secures and administers funding through the Regional Intersectoral Committee, lobbies for more local control of projects and funding, and facilitates local planning.

Territorial Youth Services

Territorial Youth Services (North Battleford) is one of the province's longest running day programs for youth, completing its 11th year of operation in 2000. Funded primarily as a community-based organization under Social Services, Territorial Youth Services runs a work program which provides youth the opportunity to raise money for restitution and fines, and to complete community service dispositions. The program offers a hands-on mentoring approach in teaching clients a variety of practical work skills to assist youth in developing a positive work ethic and the self discipline necessary to maintain successful employment.

Meadow Lake Early Childhood Initiative

In the Meadow Lake area, three local agencies have joined forces to form one non-profit organization with the objective to improve co-ordination of services to children. Meadow Lake Early Childhood Intervention Program, Play to Learn, and Play Corner Child Care are working together to encourage further development of children 0 - six years who have a disability, developmental delay or are at risk of becoming developmentally delayed. These services are now all located under one roof.

Plans for 2001-2002

Planning for the 2001-2002 year will focus primarily on Income Security, Child Welfare and Youth Services consultation and redesign initiatives across the various program areas within the context of the Departmental strategic plan and directions. Within this framework, specific initiatives include:

- consultation and collaboration with regional partners around the implementation of components of redesign within Income Security, Child Welfare and Youth Services;
- infrastructure support to redesign initiatives, including human resource management, financial management and property/ technology management;
- relocation of the Drumming Hill Youth Centre to a newly constructed 14 bed facility in North Battleford;
- advancement of the co-location phase in the development of a co-ordinated children's services delivery system in Lloydminster with Ribstone Child and Family Services;
- partnering with community agencies and organizations to advance Kids First initiatives across the Region; and
- implement a Family Reunification project in the Battlefords to provide intensive support to families.

Southeast Region

Kelvington
Wynyard
Foam Lake
Kamsack
Yorkton
Qu'Appelle
Indian Head
Grenfell
Weyburn
Carlyle
Estevan

The Southeast Region is a large geographic area, primarily rural in nature, with diverse cultural and economic characteristics. The geographic size presents opportunities and challenges to the effective delivery of services in that the region includes 12 health districts, 30 school divisions, 24 First Nations Bands, five Tribal Councils, 29 Métis Locals; and 93 rural municipalities. A broad range of opportunities exist in working with diverse and multi-sectoral partners which bring strengths to the region. Evidence of this diversity is seen in the service centre areas: in Fort Qu'Appelle the large First Nations population encourages service delivery that is built on cultural strengths; in the Estevan and Weyburn service area the advent of the stronger economy, based on the oil and gas industry, has introduced the need for a different range of services that reflect a booming socio-economic environment; and Yorkton acts as a service centre for an agricultural economy that is experiencing stress, and a large demographic shift in First Nations people moving from smaller rural and reserve communities to the urban community of Yorkton. Each of these diverse issues requires a flexible and integrated approach in providing a full range of Department services.

Offices:

Yorkton Service Centre
72 Smith St. E

Wynyard Sub-office
205 Bosworth St.

Weyburn Service Centre
110 Souris Ave. N.E.

Fort Qu'Appelle Service Centre
177 Segwun Ave.

Estevan Service Centre
1219 - 5th St.

Carlyle Sub-office
109 Railway Ave.

Staff serve the rural communities surrounding these centers through day offices in Stoughton, Carlyle, Balcarres, Broadview, Indian Head Kipling, Lestock, Moosomin, Punnichy, Whitewood, Foam Lake, Kelvington, Rose Valley, Wadena, Watson, Canora, Esterhazy, Kamsack, Melville, and Preeceville.

Facilities:

Orcadia Youth Residence — 38 bed open and secure custody for male and female young offenders, providing rehabilitation and reintegration programs and an emergency Family Services Stabilization Unit.

- 14 secure boys
- 12 open girls
- 12 secure girls

Kenosee Youth Camp — Kenosee Youth Camp, a 14 bed open custody facility for boys. Youth are able to continue their education, learn work skills, gain valuable work experience, and develop positive work habits which can assist them in finding employment upon their return to their home communities.

Operational First Nations Agencies and Associated Bands:

Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services, Fort Qu'Appelle
Touchwood Child and Family Services, Fort Qu'Appelle
Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services, Yorkton
File Hills Child and Family Services, Ft. Qu'Appelle

Community-Based Organizations

A total of 32 not-for-profit community organizations, aboriginal partners, or municipal governments received 83 different Social Services grants totalling $6,900,450. They delivered a wide range of programs serving children and youth, people with disabilities, and children, youth and families in crisis.

Update on plans for 2000 - 2001

Income Security Redesign

The Yorkton Income Security team developed a regional service delivery model to be implemented in 2001-02, which reflects new components: Call Centre, Jobs First, First Step, Intake, Benefit Administration and Transition Planning. (*See the Income Security Section of this report.*) A number of community partnerships have been developed to support redesign. In particular a joint partnership with Canada and Saskatchewan Career Employment Services has been developed to provide Jobs First services. A relationship is being developed with the Chamber of Commerce and community-based organizations dealing with employment and training. Extensive community consultations were held and proposals are being positively received.

Accountability

The region undertook its third annual audit of all family and youth services files. This quality review exercise indicated a significant improvement in the practices complying with the service standards outlined in each program area. In addition, the region transferred to newly hired support staff, a number of the payment and other administrative functions previously carried by social work staff. It is expected that this freeing up of time for social work staff will increase their capacity to improve practices still further.

Regional Developments and Key Issues

Family Services

The year-end child protection caseload in the region was up 9.3 per cent from the previous year. This is reflective of the continuing difficulties that families are having in parenting their children. The region's response to this increasing demand was to focus on insuring a sound family-centred approach in assisting the families while insuring the safety of the children in the process. Extensive use was made of family support or parent-aide services to assist families with learning and applying basic sound parenting approaches.

Alternative Measures

A range of community based alternative measures programs continue to be offered in the region through agreements with Touchwood Tribal Council, Yorkton Tribal Council and Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre. Consultation is provided by the Department to the alternative measures coordinators in addition to co-ordination of regular meetings with the Crown, Judiciary, RCMP, youth workers and Tribal Council Justice staff.

Young Offenders Wilderness Camp

The SE Region has developed an innovative Wilderness Camp program to promote successful reintegration of youth back to their families and communities. Nahtsiwikiwin, "in search for medicine, searching for oneself, life itself" was offered to several youth prior to their release from closed custody in December as winter is the time traditionally for teaching and storytelling. The camp created an environment through which the youth were challenged emotionally, spiritually, physically and mentally. The harshness of the winter environment created the opportunity for young men to test themselves in endurance, strength, patience and humility. The adult supports to the camp saw a great change in the attitude and level of self awareness in the youth from when they first came to camp to the end of the seven days.

Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC)

This committee is comprised of senior representatives from all major human services departments and organizations in the region and is chaired by the Regional Director. The RIC participated in numerous initiatives during the year making a major commitment to the following initiatives:

- Integrated School Linked Services
- Integrative Wraparound
- Early Childhood Development
- Local Child Action Committees

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

This past year the Southeast Region held three sessions on ECD with key stakeholders in the region, (school divisions, health districts and Child Action Committees) to obtain input to create a regional strategy for ECD.

Human Resources

During the past year, the region implemented improved administrative supports for caseworkers in the child welfare programs providing Child Protection caseworkers more time to provide direct client services.

Plans for 2001-2002

Young Offenders

- Future wilderness camps will include a Spring camp for 40 to promote rebirth and celebrate spiritual life and an Autumn women's camp; the time to prepare for the cold months, to provide the opportunity for the mothers of sons and daughters in the custody systems to learn coping and parenting skills that will help them to support the youth returning from the facilities.
- Enhancement to the alternative measures programs are ongoing in the region.
- The region will be focusing attention on the Saskatchewan Youth Services Model which sets out to improve the way we deal with youth who offend or are at-risk to offend.

Family Services

- The region will continue to focus on supporting families in their care of children. The network of Child Action Committees will be used to review local services and to explore options for better integrating services or for establishing partnerships to further develop support services for families and children. The Role of the School report will provide a useful framework for discussions.
- An analysis of family support programs will be undertaken resulting in the development of recommendations for additional initiatives in order to increase opportunities for children to remain safely at home rather than entering foster care.
- A review will be undertaken of the resource needs for children in care within the region. Through collaboration with the First Nations Child and Family Services agencies within the region, it is expected that a long term resource plan will be developed that would help to better address the needs of all children and youth in care within the region.
- The Department has embarked on a major child welfare consultation. The region will be actively involved in consultation, planning and implementation of new directions.

Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC)

Major work will be undertaken by the RIC in the areas of early childhood development and in areas referenced in the Role of the School report.

Income Security Redesign pilot

- A number of the redesign initiatives will begin this year. Jobs First and the First Step program will be getting underway in May. The opening of the Call Centre for Yorkton clients will begin in May with rural areas starting later in the fall. The transitional planning unit, to assist clients towards independence will start in June.
- There will be continuing consultations with various community groups both in Yorkton and the rural areas.

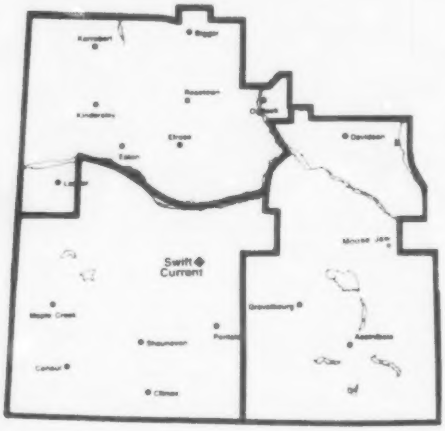
Human Resources

- The Community Support and Development Unit will undergo restructuring. Restructuring will provide more intensive program support for community-based organizations and facilitate the Child Welfare Redesign at a community level.
- The Southeast Region will be undertaking a review on how we do business in Family and Youth Services including reviewing the organizational structures in the Fort Qu'Appelle and Yorkton service centres.

Strategic Plan Rollout

The Southeast Region will continue the rollout of the Departmental Strategic Plan in all areas and will be continuing with public education and active involvement with the various stakeholders in the region.

Southwest Region



The Southwest Region provides a full range of Department services to 104 municipalities over 43,264 square miles, through four service centres: Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Kindersley and Rosetown. The region operates five day offices in Assiniboia, Davidson, Maple Creek, Shaunavon and Biggar. According to June 1997 statistics, Southwest region serves a population of 146,939 with 37,560 being under the age of eighteen years. Economics in the Southwest are primarily driven by the agriculture sector, oil and gas in the Kindersley and Swift Current areas, manufacturing and processing, as well as service and retail industries. There are two Indian Reserves and one First Nations Child and Family Services agency located in the region.

Office Locations:

Kindersley Service Centre
113 - 2nd Avenue East

Rosetown Service Centre
122 - 2nd Avenue West

Swift Current Service Centre
350 Cheadle Street West

Moose Jaw Service Centre
36 Athabasca Street West

Service is provided to rural areas surrounding these centres through the use of day offices and home visits.

Caseload and Service Activities:

Please see the summary at the end of the regional section for budget, staffing, caseloads and service activities for:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Children's Services
- Child Protection
- Foster Homes
- Young Offenders
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent
- Community Living

Regional Development and Key Issues:

Integrated Case Practice

Southwest Region is implementing an integrated case practice to support clients' independence from Departmental programs. This approach is targeted at families with multi-program involvement.

Clients and staff contribute collaboratively to the development of tasks and responsibilities to achieve mandated requirements. The lead responsibility for case management varies from case to case. Through this practice, we anticipate increased client participation and clarity around expectations, ultimately resulting in reduced length of involvement.

Family Support Worker Program - Assiniboia

The Family Support Worker Program is a successful community-based program in the areas of Assiniboia, Lafleche, Gravelbourg and Rock Glen. The Family Support Program is a model practising the principles of the Wraparound Process. The family-centred philosophy of this program is to assist families based on their strengths by formal and informal supports. The partners of the project are: ABW Shared Services - Red Coat Trail School Division No. 69; Borderland School Division No. 68; Golden Plains School Division No. 124; Assiniboia Ministerial Association; R.C.M.P. ; Social Services; and South Country Health District.

Our partnership in this project has resulted in early intervention for protection services and community support for families. Services are focused at school-aged children at this stage in the project.

Fresh Start Program - Swift Current

Social Services, Eastside Church of God, Supported Employment Services and Human Resources Development Canada have partnered in Swift Current to provide an employment opportunity for up to eight youths at any given time in the program. These youths are young offenders who have been adjudicated or have been through alternative measures and have a restitution order; or youth considered at-risk, according to

Human Resources Development Canada definition, between 16 and 29 years.

The majority of the referrals come from Social Services. Funding from Social Services, HRDC and employment contracts has maintained the program, since the start date in June 2000.

The youth and the co-ordinator meet to set goals before the youth becomes part of the work crew.

While they are in the program they learn job skills, and are supported in participating in specific life skills. The goals includes accountability for offenders and assistance in creating independence for the youth from government systems.

To date there have been 20 youth involved in this program.

Alternative Measures Evaluation

A community evaluation of the Alternative Measures Program was completed for the Moose Jaw District. The evaluation indicated there is good support for the use of alternative measures in the youth justice system in our district. One of the recommendations was to select youth early in the youth justice process to have the most effect at deterring and diverting the youth from future offenses.

Food Security Network Moose Jaw

A collaboration of several community agencies and government departments participate in the Moose Jaw Food Security Network. The network activities are facilitated through Hunger Moose Jaw. The Food Security Network participates in the child nutrition programs that include school lunch and Kids Cooking. The community outreach programs include a community kitchen and food preparation classes. The network is looking at the implementation of a Good Food Box program and community garden projects.

Youth Companion Program for at-risk Youth

The Rosetown and Outlook School Divisions partnered with Social Services to secure approximately $20,000 for a youth companion program for at-risk youth. The program will run for a full year with both a summer program and a school-year program.

The program involves matching at-risk youth with an older student to be a companion to the youth. The companion would be involved from one to three hours per week and would take the youth to a variety of community and recreational events to enhance social and communication skills and life skills while modelling a positive, responsible community experience. The companions can earn volunteer time to fulfil some class requirements as well as be paid for some of the time they are involved.

Referrals will be made and screened by the partner agencies. The school counselors will train, supervise and guide the companions in their work with the youth.

Update on Plans for 2000 - 2001:

The region will continue to work with Saskatchewan Health and Health Districts in the province in relation to the delivery and program development for Early Childhood Initiatives, specifically in the Successful Mothers Program.

Outcomes:

- The region has continued to be responsible for the Provincial Co-ordinator in the Successful Mothers Program and has been involved in Moose Jaw office with the Early Childhood Development Committee as well as in the Swift Current community for Southwestern Saskatchewan.
- The region will review the Family and Youth Automated Payment system delivery options for the individual offices, determine the best alternative and implement the plan.

Outcomes:

- The region has established Administrative Aides in Rosetown and Kindersley, Swift Current and Moose Jaw office in order for the Family and Youth Automated Payment system to be delivered by support staff.
- The region will develop and implement an action plan to manage regional resources for children.

- The region has established a centralized process to priorize placements for children co-ordinated by the Program Manager in Family and Youth.
- The region will explore and develop options for increased alternative measures for young offenders.

Client Outcomes for 2000 - 2001:

Income Security

- average number of cases — a decrease of 196 cases or 7.4 per cent
- average number of cases per worker — a decrease of 19.2 cases per worker or 11 per cent
- total amount of assistance — a decrease of $892,000 or 5 per cent
- average cost per case — an increase of $15 or 2.5 per cent

Child Protection, Children in Care and Foster Care Costs

- average daily count of children in care — a decrease of 14, or 14.89 per cent
- average number of child protection cases — a decrease of 31 or 12.97 per cent
- monthly average of new protection referral and/or investigations — a decrease of 1 case or 2.9 per cent
- total cost of foster care — a decrease of $150,236 or 11.8 per cent

Plans for 2001 - 2002:

- Work with health and education boards and community partners to identify alternative program services and options for at-risk families who are identified through the early childhood screening process.
- Participate with the Moose Jaw Food Security Network to support the Good Food Box initiative.
- Provide non-monetary support to community projects such as the Family Support Workers Program by assisting in the development of an evaluation process.
- Implement Income Security Redesign by working with community partners and stakeholders to increase employment opportunities for clients. Continue to improve and streamline service delivery.
- Undertake consultation regarding child welfare and work with community partners and stakeholders to identify, develop and provide services to families who do not require Child Welfare intervention.
- Work with schools and community partners to clarify and develop services as recommended by the Role of the School Report.

Saskatoon Region

Saskatoon
Saskatoon Region

Offices:

Sturdy Stone,
122-3rd Ave.
North

Midtown Village,
220 Idylwyld Dr. South

Family Support Centre,
315 Avenue M South

Staff serve the rural communities surrounding Saskatoon through day offices in Humboldt, Rosthern and Watrous.

Facilities:

Yarrow Youth Farm — 14 bed, open custody facility for male young offenders (12 to 18 years), with a farm program.

Saskatoon Children's Shelter — 16 bed co-ed, intensive therapeutic residential program for high-risk children and youth in the care of the Minister. It provides assessment and stabilization.

Operational First Nations Agencies and Associated Bands:

Saskatoon Tribal Council Family Services Inc., Saskatoon/Prince Albert/Yorkton

Caseloads and Service Activities

Please see the summary table at the end of the regional section for budget, staffing, caseloads and service activities for:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Children's Services
- Child Protection
- Foster Homes
- Young Offenders
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent
- Community Living
- Domestic Abuse Outreach

The Family Service program has seen a decrease of 57 cases over last year. Children in care caseload increased by 39. Income Security has seen a reduction in caseloads of 2,321 at year-end March 31, 2001, including a transfer of 1,000 cases to Benefit Administration within Income Security Redesign.

Regional Developments and Key Issues

Child Welfare League of America

Saskatoon Region worked with the Child Welfare League of America to review its service delivery system. The Region is implementing the key recommendations from the review for the Family and Youth Program in four key areas:

- workflow and case management processes,
- intake and investigation,
- organizational structure, and
- services for Aboriginal clients.

Community-Based Organizations

A total of 37 not-for-profit community organizations, municipal or Aboriginal governments received 99 different Social Services grants totalling $15,540,485. They delivered a wide range of programs servicing children and youth, people with disabilities, and children, youth and families in crisis.

Saskatoon Community Solutions for Children Not in School Action Plan:

As part of the community effort to remedy the issue of Children Not in School, a conference was held in September, 2000 entitled *Community Solutions to Children Not in School*, which sought to generate a framework for community action. Consensus was reached at the conference that leadership for an action plan would be developed by the Co-ordinators of the Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC), Saskatoon Communities for Children (SCC) and other community stakeholders.

In Saskatoon, it has been conservatively estimated there are in excess of 1,000 children and youth not in school. The community is experiencing alarmingly high numbers of children and youth on the street, demonstrated by police arrests and youth custody, a high number of teen pregnancies, a greater need for health services related to high risk behaviours such as drug abuse, unprotected sexual activity, and welfare dependency.

The consequences for children and families in many cases are lifelong hardship, unemployment, financial dependence and higher incidences of illness and chronic poverty, a lack of sense of belonging to the community, and alienation and exclusion from mainstream community activity.

The action plan will be implemented in 2001/2002 and will initially affect 100 children and youth not in school or at risk of leaving. The plan will require multiple strategies, including building on successful initiatives already underway, integrating and co-ordinating services, raising awareness of the issue to gain support for resource development, tracking children not in school and identifying and addressing more of the root causes for this growing issue.

Wraparound:

Within the Saskatoon Region, considerable development has occurred with two wraparound initiatives; the Absentee Assessment Team and Saskatchewan Rural Wraparound Project.

The wraparound process is a way to improve the lives of persons who have complex needs. The process is used to involve community partners in developing case plans. The plan is developed by a wraparound team; the four to ten people who know the person best, including the person and their family. No more than half of the team can be from the professional community.

Plans are needs-driven, rather than service-driven; and family-centred, rather than child-centred. The plans build upon the strengths, values, norms and preferences of the child, family and community.

The Absentee Assessment Team Wraparound Project targeted two core neighbourhood schools in Saskatoon, Westmount Community School and St. Michael's School. There were extensive partnerships developed, including Social Services, Saskatoon District Health, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Saskatoon Community Clinic and both Public and Catholic School systems.

The Saskatoon Rural Wrap-Around Project covers an extensive rural area, including Saskatoon Region and surrounding area. In 2000, a co-ordinator was hired.

In 2000-2001, eight families were involved in the wrap process.

An extensive partnership has been developed, including representatives from Saskatchewan Valley School Division, Saskatoon East and Saskatoon West School Divisions, Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation, Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, Saskatoon District Health, Social Services, Gabriel Springs Health District, RCMP and the Kinsmen Children's Centre.

In 2000-2001, a community directory of formal and informal resources per region was developed along with questionnaires for families, and bi-monthly updates for facilitation and training.

Saskatoon Communities for Children:

The Saskatoon Communities for Children (SCC) is an organization comprised of local individuals, agencies, civic government and provincial government departments. The membership has expanded to include over 50 members.

Over the past year, SCC has experienced a period of growth as the organization worked to develop and implement plans of action to address eight priorities (seven working groups and one project — the inclusive school calendar). Growth has been characterized by a) research, developmental and/or evaluation activities within most of the working groups; b) increased participation by both community and government representatives in the working groups; and c) the creation of several new subcommittees by the working groups.

Update on Plans for 2000-2001

- Two Income Security staff are located at Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Centre where they are able to develop co-ordinated approaches for the training needs and employment opportunities for social assistance recipients.
- Saskatoon Communities for Children with their partners implemented their strategic plan to stop the sexual exploitation of children. Social Services continued funding of established initiatives, including the Safe Shelter.
- The Child Welfare League of America completed their review and 21 major recommendations

are being implemented (see Regional Developments).

- Training was completed on the new Family Centred Case Management Model, as a basis for generalizing family and children's cases by the end of 2001.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Further implement the Child Welfare League of America recommendations to improve service delivery system to better meet the needs of clients.
- Develop and implement a framework for consultation with stakeholders for Early Childhood Development Initiatives, Income Security Redesign, Child Welfare Redesign and the Youth Services plan.
- Development of the Core Community Impact 200 Action Plan to provide education, training and employment opportunities for 200 core city residents currently on social assistance. The initiative is in partnership with CanSask, SIAST, Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA) and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Restructure regional services to facilitate the implementation of the department's strategic plan and direction.
- Continue the work with the Saskatoon Communities for Children and the Regional Intersectoral Committee on initiatives to address housing, education, employment and safety needs of children and youth.
- Continue as an active member of the Saskatoon Communities for Children's Working Group to Stop the Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Regina Region

Regina Region
Regina

Offices:

2045 Broad Street
Regina

Staff serve the rural communities surrounding this centre through day offices in Cupar, Regina Beach and Strasbourg.

Facilities:

Dales House — Residential assessment and stabilization, young offender open custody (16 beds), family preservation, and young offender/family services home-based residential services.

Eden House — Residential treatment group home (4 beds) for boys under 12.

Caseloads and Service Activities

Please see the summary table at the end of the regional section for budget, staffing, caseloads and service activities for:

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Children's Service Caseload
- Child Protection Caseload
- Foster Homes
- Young Offenders
- Adoption Caseload
- Teen and Young Parent Caseload
- Community Living

Regional Developments and Key Issues

Community-Based Organizations

A total of 42 not-for-profit community organizations, municipal or Aboriginal governments received 73 different Social Services grants totalling $11,583,100. They delivered a wide range of programs serving children and youth, people with disabilities, and children, youth and families in crisis.

Service Enhancement Project. As planned, the region moved to reassign approximately 500 income security cases to other units and workers within the office so that each family who previously had multiple program involvement would be served across programs by the same small group of staff. This reorganization resulted in groups of 150 to 180 client families being assigned to matched units of Income Security, Family Services and Community Outreach workers. The initial results suggested that services were soon being delivered in a more consistent way with higher levels of satisfaction from clients, and a better ability on the part of workers to communicate and plan effectively together. Initial planning for evaluation has taken place for implementation within the first year of the project's operation.

Child Welfare Caseloads. As was the case over the past number of years, child welfare activity increased over the previous year in the areas of child protection investigations, assignments of cases for ongoing casework, and in the number of children in care. A pilot project to provide support services to child welfare workers saw good results and was later expanded in the office, and throughout the province. Case review work continued during the year with a focus on improving the quality of service and the identification of cases where involvement could be appropriately concluded.

Regina Children's Justice Centre. This successful child abuse investigation program has operated since the mid 90's by locating Departmental child protection staff with Regina City Police. In the fall of 2000 the program was moved to a new storefront location near downtown Regina.

Income Security Redesign

Regina was selected as one of two pilot sites to demonstrate the elements of the second phase of income security redesign. Successful planning efforts occurred throughout the year to prepare for implementation of several program elements in 2001-2002.

Youth Justice Forum

Regina was identified as a pilot site for developing new approaches to youth justice, leading up to the implementation of the new federal legislation, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. With the support of a provincial steering group, and the Regina Intersectoral Committee, a large number of agencies and departments were involved in a planning process throughout the year. In a related development, Social Services has joined the Health District, the two School Districts, and SGI as institutional members on the expanded City of Regina Crime

Prevention Commission. Priorities for this group are consistent with, and will support the actions of the Youth Justice Forum.

Community Outreach

Departmental community outreach staff worked in a number of community locations to develop and maintain activities which support improved social and economic outcomes for Regina citizens. The majority of people involved in this array of activities were also clients of the Department. Developments included the introduction of the Family Food Basket, the establishment of a child care centre operating at the Food Bank, as well as a number of other programs and activities in various locations throughout the city. The service enhancement project provided a better means of connecting the Department's clients to these activities in their communities.

Human Resources

The stability in a number of the work units has increased. As a result of vacancies, several permanent positions made available in the budget process and some local restructuring, approximately 30 positions were available for permanent staffing during the year.

Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC)

During the year the region participated in a range of interagency activities, co-ordinated by the RIC. The RIC continued to support development in seven round table interagency activities, and initiated an eighth activity, a Labour Market Planning round table. Several additional agencies were added to the committee (RCMP, SIAST, Cupar School Division) which now has senior representatives from all major human services and funding departments and organizations in Regina. A joint initiative of the RIC and the City of Regina was the event "Opportunities for Visioning" which brought together representatives from a wide range of human service boards and authorities in Regina and area to consider social and demographic trends and the possibilities for joint planning. Round tables working on the issues of children and youth exploited through prostitution, early childhood development, and youth justice were especially active in significant program planning or development activities.

Update on Plans for 2000-2001

- A pilot project to enhance administrative support services to child welfare workers saw good results and was later expanded in the Regina office, and throughout the province.
- The service enhancement project was planned and implemented, successfully co-ordinating Income Security, Family Services and Community Outreach service for families with multiple program involvements
- As one of two pilot sites to demonstrate the elements of the second phase of Income Security Redesign, successful planning efforts occurred in the region throughout the year to prepare for implementation of several program elements beginning in April, 2001-2002.
- In May, 2000 the Opportunities for Visioning event was held which brought together representatives from a wide range of human service boards and authorities in Regina. A related development following this workshop was the formation of an ongoing Labour Market Roundtable, initiated by the RIC.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Implement a human resource plan which strengthens administrative supports for caseworkers in child welfare programs, recruits new positions for the long term ward unit, and fills other vacant positions.
- Further develop the income security service enhancement project and begin an evaluation process.
- Implement the pilot project featuring the new elements of the second phase of Income Security Redesign.
- Undertake broad consultation on child welfare redesign.
- Implement program elements as part of Youth Justice Forum pilot project.
- Work with community partners to develop and implement the Early Childhood Development Initiative.
- Continue to profile the elements of the strategic plan as the context for other regional developments.
- Follow up on Regional Intersectoral Committee's initiative to work with elected authorities and other community leaders to identify a long term human services plan and community and economic development strategies for Regina and area. Advance other RIC round table activities.

Regional Caseload Activity

		Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	Saskatoon	Regina
1.	Yearly Expenditures (millions)	53.3	43	34.3	23.7	110.5	96.3
2.	Staffing (FTE's)	189.7	123.7	105.4	78.4	255	226.8
3.	Saskatchewan Assistance Plan Cases	3,908	3,583	2,983	2,427	9,896	8,306
4.	Children's Services Caseload	585	284	257	108	754	918
5.	Child Protection Caseload	483	245	318	183	677	943
6.	Foster Homes	200	103	88	61	216	177
7.	Young Offenders	621	493	373	194	510	478
8.	Adoption Caseload	140	56	146	91	292	245
9.	Teen and Young Parent Caseload	66	26	42	40	106	105
10.	Community Living Cases	591	521	596	573	971	637

1 & 2 Includes regional offices and facilities

3 Additional 1857 Social Assistance cases are centrally delivered through the Benefit Administration and Audit Unit. As well, another 404 are delivered through Northern Bands.

3 - 10 Selected statistics — all statistics are as of March 31, 2001. The total number of clients in any given program will be higher, as a number of people enter and leave a program during the year.

Budget Amounts Calculations	Financial Services	SAP	Total
Regina	32.480	63.830	96.3
Saskatoon	31.724	78.820	110.5
Southwest	6.816	16.887	23.7
Southeast	12.688	21.604	34.3
Northwest	14.522	28.521	43.0
Northeast	23.512	29.807	53.3

Regional Caseload Activity

		Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	Saskatoon	Regina
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Northwest	14.522	28.521	43.0
Northeast	23.512	29.807	53.3

Support Services

The following services are provided to assist the service divisions. These services include:

- Communications and Public Education
- Research and Evaluation
- Strategic Policy
- Organizational Development
- Community Development
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Technology and Property Management
- Financial Management Services

Communications and Public Education

The Communications and Public Education Branch provides strategic communications planning; public education; media relations; speech, pamphlet and report writing and editing; desktop publishing; and marketing services to the Department.

Objectives

As a support service to the Department, this branch's mandate is to provide communications, marketing, and public education services and support to the Department, to assist it in achieving its strategic directions and program goals.

The branch has the following overall goals:

- provide information to the public, clients, stakeholders and the media;
- assist the Department in its efforts to be accountable to the public and others for its activities and decisions;
- provide quality, effective communications and public education services (such as writing, design and media relations);
- work with community partners in communicating to the public;
- provide effective marketing services so that potential clients (e.g. foster parents) are aware of programs which they may choose to participate in or be eligible for.

Organization

Communications and Public Education has five staff: the Director, a Senior Communications Consultant, Public Education Consultant, Communications Consultant, and a Desktop Designer Office Manager. Its expenditure for the year was $452,416.

Activities

In the previous year, the following activities were planned for the branch:

- **completing SES (Saskatchewan Employment Supplement) campaign to have 8,000 clients by October.**

  SES intake moved from approximately 5,840 clients a year to approximately 6,480 clients by the end of the fiscal year. The campaign will be ongoing until the target is reached.

- **based on survey results, develop public education plans on key department issues, particularly income security, young offender alternative measures (from 1999-2000) and child welfare (1999-2000).**

  A public opinion survey revealed some major gaps in public knowledge, particularly in income security (for example, only five per cent of the public could correctly respond that social assistance caseloads were declining, not rising.) A major public education effort in December, focused on announcing Phase II of Income Security Redesign, helped move the number of people who could correctly identify that caseloads were declining from five to 14 per cent. This too will be an ongoing effort to ensure the public has accurate information. A public education campaign on young offender alternative measures was put on hold until the Youth Justice Model pilots are more mature.

- **develop a communications strategy for the Office of Disability Issues, concurrent with the release of the Council on Disability Issues first public report in the fall of 2000 (from 1999-2000).**

  Release of the Disability Action Plan was deferred to the spring of 2001.

- **develop formal media strategy.**

  With the department developing an entirely new strategic plan during the year, a new strategic plan for the Branch became necessary. This will be written during the coming year, and it will contain elements relating to media relations, aboriginal communications, public education, client communications and staff communications.

- **provide media training to management staff in all regions and facilities, and with community partners.**

  This was provided to Northwest Region and Valley View Centre, and for partners such as the Valley View Parent Advisory Council, Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, Saskatchewan Association of Recycling Centres, and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. This will be an ongoing function.

- **develop communications plan and activities targeted to public and key stakeholders on Phase II Income Security Redesign, aboriginal issues and childrens' issues.**

  A major launch of Phase II occurred in December 2000, resulting in an increase in public understanding of the success of Phase I, and strong editorial support for Phase II. Children's issues focused on Early Childhood Development, particularly the federal/provincial/territorial initiative announced in September 2000, in which the federal government committed to funding $73 million over five years for ECD activities in Saskatchewan, beginning April 1, 2001. A successful launch of this initiative with the Federal Minister occurred in September 2000.

Other activities:

- Major media issues in the year included the response to the Children's Advocate's report: *Children and Youth in Care Review: Listen to their Voices*, the launch of the Early Childhood Development initiative, and Phase II Income Security Redesign.
- Major publications in the year included an Annual Progress Report for the Action Plan for Children, and A Child Should Know, a booklet summarizing children's legal rights in Saskatchewan.
- In partnership with Saskatchewan Justice and File Hills/Fort Qu'Appelle Tribal Agency, produced an educational video to deter Aboriginal youth from becoming engaged in the sex trade.
- Began an extensive public education campaign with the business community on Phase II Income Security Redesign.

Goals for 2001 - 2002

- The major goal will be to redevelop the Branch's strategic plan with the Department's new strategic direction. This will likely result in more focused communications efforts with clients, staff and key stakeholder groups of the department (e.g. Aboriginal groups, groups representing persons with disabilities etc.)
- Continue SES promotion until a target of 8,000 active clients is reached.
- Raise profile of disability issues, and Child Welfare Redesign, as well as ongoing communications and public education efforts in Income Security Redesign.
- Addressing gaps in public knowledge as identified through polling and other research.

Research and Evaluation

The Research and Evaluation Branch helps the Department design, implement and assess the effectiveness of programs and policies. In doing this, staff help others to understand what service needs exist, the characteristics and needs of clients in programs, and what the outcomes of a program are. The Branch also provides basic research services to the Department, including analysis of social, demographic and economic trends, and analysis of special studies.

The major objectives of the Research and Evaluation Branch are to:

- support the Department policy directions and strategic plan, through research of the social and economic environments of the province;
- provide executive management with a base of credible and current information with which to plan new programs or modify existing programs;
- provide a focal point for research and evaluation activities in the Department;
- provide technical support for evaluating specific projects; and
- advance the discussion and understanding of social issues through valid and reliable research and disseminate information to staff.

Organization

The Branch is comprised of five full-time and two part-time staff members. Research and Evaluation operated on an expenditure of $453,760.

The Department's library is also located within the branch. It provides staff with the opportunity to read the latest journals, conduct bibliographic searches, use the Internet to search for information, or to obtain information through inter-library loans.

Update on plans for 2000/01

In the past fiscal year, the Department has conducted two major surveys. In keeping with the strategic plan, research has been conducted to increase our knowledge base of services, through the experiences of clients.

During 2000/01 the branch completed a study of non-financial barriers faced by people on social assistance. This was done through a telephone survey of 430 social assistance applicants from Yorkton and Regina region. These two areas were chosen so that the study would inform planning for client services in the new pilot projects for Yorkton and Regina. The survey documented client needs in several areas of life, such as transportation, housing, health care, child care, food adequacy, addictions, education, etc., and assessed the extent to which these posed problems for finding and maintaining employment.

A large telephone survey of day care users was completed in March 2001. The Department developed the survey to find out what child care arrangements families currently make, what are their preferences for care, what are troublesome issues around arranging child care, and what government activities are most beneficial to parents requiring child care. Over 1,250 parents with children under 13 years of age were interviewed in the survey.

In collaboration with Saskatchewan Health, the Branch completed a study of the Family Health Benefits program. The program provides full or partial coverage for a variety of health services for low-income families. The study looked at the uptake for health services among low-income families, and examined how use of health services changed as peoples' incomes and labour force status change. The study was funded by a grant from the Health Transitions Fund of Health Canada.

Considerable progress was made in the past year in developing datasets for measuring child welfare outcomes. The Department is a partner in an inter-provincial project to develop common measures across jurisdictions. These measures of children-in-care will provide additional information for monitoring and managing child welfare programs.

The Branch has been engaged in several projects in the youth justice area. An evaluation framework was designed for the two pilot projects

(Regina and Prince Albert) that are testing a new youth services model. The project, and evaluation are being developed interdepartmentally, involving people from the Departments of Social Services, Justice, Education and Health.

Key Trends

As in the past year, government emphasis on greater program accountability requires evaluations of program effectiveness. This trend creates additional demands for program data and analysis. As programs move toward a more evidence-based management approach, the need for reliable program data is increasing.

Plans for 2001-02

During the next fiscal year major activities of the Branch will include:

- continued evaluation and reporting on the new social assistance pilot projects associated with Income Security Redesign;
- conducting evaluations of the Youth Services pilot projects, based on the evaluation framework;
- working to further refine the Department's strategic plan, and in particular the outcome measures associated with Departmental goals and objectives; and
- working with other departments to develop outcome measures and an evaluation framework for early childhood initiatives.

Strategic Policy

The Strategic Policy Branch came into existence in the spring of 2000 to develop and maintain the Department's strategic plan and to encourage policy consistency, coherence and a client outcome focus to strategic policy development and implementation.

It serves the public in general and marginalized and low-income people in particular by supporting effective strategic decision-making by elected representatives, executive management of the Department, program delivery management and staff, and other departments and agencies.

Goals

The major goals of the Strategic Policy Branch are to:

- provide leadership in the development and maintenance of the Department's strategic plan, focusing on the inclusion of marginalized citizens in the economic and social mainstream of the province;
- support the successful implementation of the strategic plan throughout Departmental programs and across government;
- support the establishment of government-wide indicators of socio-economic inclusion and cohesion to monitor progress toward the fuller participation of marginalized people in the mainstream of provincial life;
- assist Departmental program managers and staff to identify and monitor client outcomes in Social Services programs to promote continuous improvement in departmental interventions;
- provide strategic analysis and support to Divisional, Regional and Department-wide change management plans, processes and systems; and
- provide analysis and support to the Department on issues requiring corporate or cross-jurisdiction perspective.

Organization

The branch has a staff of four and a budget of $275,000.

Accomplishments for 2000-2001

- Participated in the preparation of a new strategic plan for the Department.
- Completed an organizational review of the Department.
- Led the collaborative development of an early childhood development strategy for the province.
- Initiated a province-wide survey of parents, child care needs and preferences.
- Represented the Department and the Government of Saskatchewan in the continued development of the National Child Benefit.
- Worked with other departments and agencies in the development of plans and initiatives that support the Department's strategic directions.
- Provided information and analysis to federal, provincial, territorial governments, governments of other countries and national and international research bodies on Saskatchewan social policy initiatives.
- Provided policy advice and co-ordination on an array of departmental and interdepartmental initiatives to further the strategic directions of the Department.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Maintain and revise the Department's Strategic Plan as required and support the continued implementation of the strategic plan in programs and services of government.
- Co-ordinate work to develop a performance measurement framework for the Department.
- Develop analysis of child care policy in Saskatchewan and identify child care measures that support economic inclusion of marginalized families.
- Clarify the role of community-based organizations in the development and delivery of services within the Department's mandate.
- Support the continued development of the National Child Benefit as a means to fight child poverty and to strengthen labour market attachment for low-income families.
- Increase co-ordination of the Department's and Government's response to disability issues.
- Facilitate the Department's involvement in planning around issues that affect more than one department or agency, particularly poverty reduction.
- Consult on the Department's new strategic direction with community partners in CBO's.
- Continue consultation process with staff.

Organizational Development

Services

The Division provides organizational development and human resource management services within Social Services. These services include consultation on:

- organizational structures
- human resource management
- labour relations (SGEU and CUPE Local 600)
- human resource issues associated with program development
- organizational development

Organization

Staff in the Division act as internal consultants providing services on all facets of human resource management and organizational development.The 2000-2001 operating expenditures for the Division were $852,392. Salary expenditures for the 12 staff members totalled $612,300 with the additional $240,092 applied to operating expenses.

Divisional staff put considerable effort into the development of partnerships, both within and outside the Department. Within the Department, the organizational development consultants are assigned various program divisions, regions and facilities. The consultants meet with the management teams on a regular basis in order to discuss and address issues related to organizational development, design, human resource management and labour relations.

Objectives

Our mission is to be a leader in the development of human resource management strategies which assist the Department in achieving strategic goals, supporting program objectives, maximizing employee potential, and positioning Social Services as an employer of choice.

The objectives to accomplish this include:

- providing managers with human resource information, tools and expertise to ensure effective use of Departmental human resources;
- ensuring existing Departmental staff have access to the appropriate training in order to provide quality service to clients; and
- ensuring that the Department continues to have access to new staff with the knowledge, skills and personal attributes necessary to provide quality services.

2000-2001 Activities

Based upon goals identified in the 2000-2001 annual report staff in the Division undertook a number of activities to achieve these goals.

Goal

Provide a strategic approach to dealing with Departmental classification, labour relations and collective bargaining issues to ensure the needs of Departmental clients are being met.

Activities to Achieve Goal:

Collective Bargaining: SGEU and CUPE

Both the Public Service/Government Employees' (PS/GE) and Public Service/CUPE 600 Collective Bargaining Agreements expired on September 30, 2000, and negotiations began on these collective agreements during 2000-2001. Divisional staff spent a considerable amount of time gathering information on potential changes to these agreements in order to develop better agreements that will meet the needs of staff and managers. Social Services was represented at both bargaining tables by members of the Division.

A significant effort was put forward on behalf of both the SGEU and the Division to reach resolution of outstanding grievances. This has resulted in closure of 84 grievances during 2000-2001 which accounted for almost 32 per cent of all outstanding grievances.

Classification

The Division also co-ordinated the development of a new job description for Income Security workers. A new job description was required in order to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of Income Security Workers were appropriately classified in the context of Income Security Redesign.

Goal

To ensure that the Department continues to have access to new staff with the knowledge, skills and personal attributes necessary to provide quality services to Department program clients.

Activities to Achieve Goal:

Supervisory Learning/ Development

In several forums, supervisors in the Department identified supports required to enable them to do their job in a more efficient manner. During 2000-2001 significant efforts continued to be put forward to provide these supports including:

- providing seminars on Coaching for Optimal Performance, Performance Improvement Programs, Conducting Probationary Reviews and Corrective Discipline. In total more than 12 seminars have been offered around the province. Also, the modules developed by the Division are being requested by other government Human Resource Divisions/Branches;
- in conjunction with the Public Service Commission, the Division has provided training on the processes for hiring staff and ensuring that adequate documentation is available for all staffing actions; and
- provided six team building sessions with various staff groups.

All of these activities have provided supervisors with opportunities to meet and discuss issues that they are facing, look at best practices and learn from each other.

Plans for 2001-2002

The Organizational Development Division will continue to work with our key partners in the human resource area (staff, managers, CUPE local 600, SGEU, and the Public Service Commission) to foster a positive climate that will provide the highest level of service possible to the Department's clients. The Division has identified several key goals and strategies for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Goal

Provide a strategic approach to dealing with Departmental classification, labour relations and collective bargaining issues to ensure the needs of Departmental clients are being met.

Strategies to Achieve Goal

- Continue to participate with the Public Service Commission in the bargaining of the CUPE and SGEU collective bargaining agreements in order to ensure a Departmental perspective.
- Work with our partners (PSC, CUPE, SGEU) to ensure that changes coming from the new collective bargaining agreements are implemented with the least possible impact on Departmental operations.
- Work with the Public Service Commission to ensure that Departmental positions are adequately described and appropriately evaluated within the Equal Pay For Work of Equal Value classification plans developed jointly by the PSC and the SGEU and CUPE.

Goal — To ensure that the Department continues to have access to new staff with the knowledge, skills and personal attributes necessary to provide quality services to Department program clients.

Strategies to Achieve Goal

- enhance the human resource management skills of managers and supervisors by continuing to provide them with training on:
  - how to coach their employees;
  - performance improvement;
  - corrective discipline; and
  - performing probationary reviews.
- continue to develop core competency assessment tools, in conjunction with the Public Service Commission, to allow managers to better assess the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of individuals who are applying for positions.

Goal — Provide managers with human resource information, tools and expertise to develop methods to ensure the effective use of Departmental human resources.

Strategy to Achieve Goal

Evaluate the current sources of human resource information and develop plans to take further advantage of these sources such as employee turnover statistics.

Goal — Develop a Strategic Human Resource Plan that will support the Departmental Strategic Plan by ensuring continued retention and access to skilled employees.

Strategy to Achieve Goal

The Division will hire a Workforce Planner during 2001/2002 who will be responsible for researching and developing the elements of a strategic human resource plan to address key human resource issues and challenges facing the department.

Community Development

Services

Community development is about people taking charge of their own futures. It emphasizes building community capacity by citizens themselves identifying needs and becoming involved to determine appropriate solutions. Community development places particular emphasis on prevention, children and families, integration and culturally-appropriate services.

Objectives

The objectives of the Unit are to provide training, leadership, planning and support in community development, with the Department and communities.

Organization

This Unit operates from Saskatoon with 2.5 staff. The budget expenditure in 2000-2001 was $136,000.

Activities

Training

In co-operation with the Northern Human Services Partnership, the Community Development Unit organized and delivered training sessions for the Community Reference Panels in Cumberland House and Beauval. This included two sessions that took place at the community level, as well as two joint training sessions in Prince Albert. In addition to the panel training, the CDU provided ongoing training and consulting for the staff of the CRP's on two other occasions. The Unit played a major role in the implementation of the midterm evaluation process of the Community Reference Panels.

In addition, the CDU delivered a number of workshops to community organizations. Some of these are as follows: A community development workshop for an interagency group in Meadow Lake; a strategic planning workshop for Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association; a workshop on the causes and consequences of poverty; and presentations to the Faculty of Social Work and to SIFC Students.

The Unit continues to provide workshops on capacity building, strategic planning, board training, decision-making, partnership development, conflict resolution and information sessions on topics like poverty, Community Economic Development (CED), etc.

Leadership and Planning

In partnership with CEDNET, the CDU assisted with the organization of a Western Regional Policy Forum on Community Economic Development which took place in Saskatoon. The working forum included representatives from Alberta and Manitoba. As a follow-up, the Unit took part in the CEDNET National Policy Forum in Vancouver as a panel presenter. This was a significant conference working towards a national policy for CED.

As part of the continuing development of CED locally and provincially the CDU was a partner in the development of the Community First Development Fund of Saskatoon Inc. in Saskatoon. The CEDFS was publicly launched in February 2001 with an initial capitalization of $400,000. The fund raises capital through the sale of low interest Social Investment Certificates. The capital will be used to guarantee loans for large CED projects.

The Unit continues to work in partnership with Saskatchewan Economic and Co-operative Development to support the three existing Neighbourhood Development Organizations in Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina. This past year has seen increasing interest in the development of an NDO in North Battleford. The Unit has offered assistance in the development stage.

The NDOs are presently involved in developing and implementing an evaluation process.

The CDU partnered with CDSS and the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspaper Association in providing a conference focusing on Partnering with the Media to Strengthen your Community.

As facilitators for the Saskatchewan Inter Municipal Housing Network, the Unit partnered with several organizations to present regional forums on affordable and alternative housing options. Two forums have been held, one in Saskatoon and one in Regina. Two more are planned for Moose Jaw and Prince Albert.

Plans for 2001 - 2002

- Continue to assist with the development and establishment of an NDO in North Battleford.
- Complete the evaluation of NDOs in Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina.
- Work with the Anti-Poverty Coalition with its process in responding to the Income Security Redesign work.
- Continue to work with the CRP's in Cumberland House and Beauval particularly with regard to their evaluation and the establishment of interdepartmental/inter-sectoral funding to ensure their sustainability.
- Continue to work with SIM and the regional housing forums toward the development of alternative community generated options for an affordable housing policy in Saskatchewan.

Intergovernmental Relations

Services

Intergovernmental Relations Branch provides analysis and advice to senior management of the Department and to other departments of government on intergovernmental issues and social policy.

The branch has three core functions:

- representing the Department's interests in the development of national social policy projects and initiatives;
- negotiation, interpretation and claiming functions related to federal-provincial cost sharing agreements; and
- working with the Department's service divisions as well as other government departments to ensure that new intergovernmental initiatives are developed to reflect a government-wide policy perspective.

Cost sharing agreements administered by the Branch include the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities Agreement and the Young Offenders Agreement. Also included are chargebacks to the federal government for some services provided to First Nations' people.

Objectives

The Intergovernmental Relations Branch strives to ensure that the strategic goals of the Department are realized and the most effective use is made of government resources through the building and maintenance of strong and positive working relationships with other governments and with other agencies of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Organization

The Branch has a staff of six and expenditures of $359,728.

2000-2001 Achievements

- Provided support to the Minister and Deputy Minister in their role as national co-chairs for the Forums of Social Service Ministers and Deputy Ministers. Saskatchewan is co-chairing these forums from October 2000 to November 2001 and provides secretariat support to these forums during this period.
- Worked with other agencies of government to secure a national commitment to the Early Childhood Development Agreement (reflected in the First Ministers' Communiqué of September 2000).
- Supported the ongoing implementation of the National Child Benefit (NCB).
- Participated in the development of a national progress report on *In Unison 2000* and the Disability Links Web site.
- Provided support to the Deputy Minister as national co-chair of the National Children's Agenda.
- Managed the ongoing implementation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD).
- Supported research and policy analysis conducted by the Office of Disability Issues.
- Prepared briefings and presentation materials for nine intergovernmental meetings of Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

Plans for 2001-2002

The Intergovernmental Relations Branch will continue to support the Department's participation in intergovernmental meetings and to manage the Department's cost sharing arrangements with the federal government.

The Branch will also promote the Department's interests through its continued work on:

- lead province responsibility for the national forums of Social Services Departments;
- the National Child Benefit initiative;
- the development of a National Children's Agenda through its work on the reporting and accountability requirements of the Early Childhood Development initiative;
- the federal/provincial/territorial *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* initiative;
- implementation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities; and
- the maintenance and updating of Saskatchewan's section of the Disability WebLinks site.

Technology and Property Management Services

The Division is made up of three major areas — Information and Technology Services, Property Management and Support Services.

Information and Technology Services

This area includes:

- operation of the Department's computer systems;
- support and training of the Automated Client Index (ACI) system and all desktop computer products including Lotus Notes and Lotus SmartSuite;
- operation of a helpdesk to provide a single point of contact to resolve problems and provide support to Department staff province-wide;
- maintenance of a technical infrastructure that includes the Local and Wide Area Networks (LAN/WAN). These networks connect 55 of the Department's offices and facilities with each other, other government departments via the Government E-Mail System (GEMS), and the World Wide Web via the Internet;
- management and development of new system initiatives;
- consulting services on technology issues with other divisions and regions;
- ongoing enhancements, maintenance and support for six major business applications operating on three computer technologies - mainframe, midrange (UNIX) computers, and LAN based microcomputers. (There has been significant change since 1995 when there were three major applications, all operating on a mainframe computer); and
- new forms of service delivery including the Internet, a Call Centre, and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) computer system.

Property Management

This area is responsible for co-ordinating all capital projects, office space and lease costs, construction, tenant improvements and building-related occupational health and safety issues throughout the regions and for all facilities. These responsibilities extend to 32 offices, 18 facilities and 73 day-offices in 2000-2001.

Support Services

This area is responsible for managing the services necessary to support the day-to-day operations of the Department. These responsibilities include managing Freedom of Information requests; providing consultation on records storage; mail and stock room management; managing the acquisition of office furniture and equipment; managing the Department's leased vehicles and co-ordinating printing and reproduction requirements.

Objectives

The Technology and Property Management Division, along with regional support teams, provide and maintain information technology and physical infrastructures. The Division's initiatives enable Department employees to effectively deliver programs and services to the people of Saskatchewan.

Working in partnership with our stakeholders and vendors, the division facilitates, trains and delivers support for the daily operational needs of the Department.

In addition, the Division strives to provide planning and development of cost-effective technical and environmental solutions to meet business needs and strategic objectives.

Organization

The Division operates with a permanent staff of 25 people. Its budget is shown below.

Divisional Salaries	$1,232,162
Information and Technology Services Expenditures	7,793,537
Property Management Annual Accommodation and Lease Costs	11,872,800
Support Services Expenditures	2,698,446
Total	**$23,596,945**

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Update on Plans for 2000-2001

In relation to the plans identified for 2000-2001, the Division continued to provide support on several multi-year projects, while completing other initiatives.

Information Technology

- Provided technical support and consultation for the ongoing Income Security Redesign project, as well as Family and Youth Services' work with the Department of Justice on changes resulting from the new *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- Continued to work with other government departments and agencies, such as the Information Technology Office, Health, SaskTel, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, the Government On-Line Committee, etc., in several areas. These included a government-wide high speed network; a security framework; E-government strategy and delivery of services; and the timely and confidential sharing of information.
- Established the Regional Support Team whose role it is to identify opportunities for staff to use technology more effectively; identify and fulfill training needs of all staff; assist local experts in skills development; and, in general, provide proactive support to regions and facilities.

The division developed an Information Technology and Management (IT&M) Plan which ensured the Division's objectives were aligned with the Department's strategic business objectives, and identified strategic IT&M initiatives.

The Division continued to develop the Department's use of e-mail and office automation products in order to enable more effective case practice. To this end, a number of forms, database, and workflow applications were developed to assist with workload and communications throughout the Department, which leads to a more effective and efficient use of staff time.

In conjunction with the Information Technology Office and their Security Review initiative, the Division completed the assessment of the Department's current technical and physical access procedures and policies. Threat and risk assessments were performed on high priority systems and facilities.

The stability and security of the information technology infrastructure was improved by completing the installation of anti-virus and remote support software on all of the Department's microcomputers.

Over 130 microcomputers were replaced during the year on an as-needed basis. This selected replacement will continue as the older computers become less capable of handling the standard office automation software and business applications used by the Department.

Three initiatives were started late in the year that will review and make recommendations on the technical architecture used by the Department, on implementation of a data warehousing capability, and on future plans for upgrading the financial applications used in two program areas. All of these will have a bearing on the future direction of the Department's Information Technology and Management initiatives.

A computer imaging solution was implemented in Family and Youth Services' Post Adoption area. All 1.8 million paper and photographic records were scanned into a computer imaging system and staff now access these records on-line. The original adoption records are archived at an environmentally secure site. This project was a success and provides experience toward future larger scale projects using this technology.

Property Management

Occupational health and safety issues continued to be addressed in all offices and residential facilities. Air quality testing and providing a safe environment for our clients, residents and staff is an ongoing priority for the Department.

Throughout the year any shortfall in office space or residential beds was addressed. The Division managed to make a number of repairs to the facilities to improve conditions for staff and clients. Some of these repairs included the replacement of a gymnasium floor, bedroom repairs, painting, sound proofing, and lock replacement to address safety issues.

The Department is working on a long term strategic plan for Valley View Centre. This plan will provide direction on the long-term space needs for a more cost-effective operation of the centre.

During the year, the Division was responsible for managing some 965,870 square feet of office and residential space across the province. Lease renewal for office accommodations is an ongoing process. Several new leases were managed throughout the year.

Support Services

In addition to ensuring that the Department's daily needs are being met, procedures are being constantly reviewed within the support services area to identify any inefficiencies that may exist and resolve them.

For example, in the past year a new process was implemented for reporting distances travelled while using one of the 400 CVA vehicles being leased by the Department. In the past the distances were reported in triplicate which took a lot more time by both department and SPMC staff and also resulted in many errors. Under the new process the information is entered only once with fewer errors and a quicker turn around time. Deadlines, especially at year-end are no longer a problem.

Plans for 2001-2002

- Update the Information Technology and Management plan to align with the strategic direction of the Department in accordance with government planning guidelines.
- Provide technical support and leadership, where necessary, to enable the Department's strategic initiatives, including these multi-year undertakings:
  - income security redesign;
  - child welfare initiatives;
  - *Youth Criminal Justice Act* implementation;
  - First Nations Child and Family Services' agencies partnerships;
  - occupational health and safety concerns; and
  - service integration with provincial and federal government departments.
- Continue to strengthen the Department's information technology function in the following areas:
  - improve system development and operational policies and procedures;
  - continue to review and revise the information technology security policies and procedures;
  - review and make recommendations to revise the technical architecture and software tools used by the Department;
  - review and make recommendations on implementation of a data warehousing capability;
  - review and make recommendations for upgrading the financial applications used in two program areas;
  - participate in the implementation of a government-wide shared data network;
  - implement reliable and efficient microcomputers as necessary to replace older model computers; and
  - explore technological innovations, and adopt as necessary, to more effectively meet and manage the Department's business needs.
- In the Property Management and Support Services area the Division will:
  - address occupational health and safety issues and continue review of other workplace environments;
  - continue working with Family and Youth Services to implement solutions for young offender capacity issues;
  - work with Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation in the review of the long-term space study of Valley View Centre;
  - ensure the effective completion of all 2001-2002 lease renewals; and
  - continue to review the processes used by support services to ensure their effectiveness and to improve efficiencies.

Financial Management Services

Financial Management Division consists of two main functions - the strategic resource planning function and expenditure control function.

The Budget Management Branch provides prospective financial planning for Department expenditures through the annual budget development and in-year tracking and forecasting of operational expenditures. In this role, the Division is directly connected to the strategic planning process for all program divisions and for the Department overall.

The Financial Services Branch performs a controlling function by ensuring Department expenditures are made in a fashion that meets all legislative, regulatory, policy and professional accounting standards. In this role, the Branch works with program divisions and the Department of Finance, Comptroller's Division.

Objectives

The objectives of Budget Management Branch are to:

- co-ordinate annually the development of a Department budget strategy for consideration by government;
- co-ordinate the preparation of detailed line item budgets to facilitate monthly tracking and management of expenditures;
- prepare briefing material that will assist in answering questions during Committee of Finance deliberations in the Legislature;
- establish internal program and Departmental financial targets to guide divisions and the Department in meeting financial planning objectives;
- track Department cashflows and co-ordinate Interim Supply and Special Warrant funding arrangements as needed; and
- co-ordinate Departmental accountability and reporting functions which assist in the monitoring and evaluation of program activity.

The objectives of the Financial Services Branch are to:

- ensure that all payments are properly authorized in accordance with legislation, regulations, Department of Finance policies and Departmental policies;
- ensure that all payments and revenue are accurately recorded;
- ensure payments are made on a timely basis;
- ensure that all Departmental financial systems have appropriate financial controls to safeguard public funds;
- manage the Department payroll processes;
- manage the Department's imprest and trust accounts; and,
- manage community-based organization contracts and payments for the Department.

Organization

The Division's total expenditure for 2000-2001 was $1,385,826 with a staff complement of 32 full time equivalents. The Budget Management Branch consists of five staff while the Financial Services Branch is organized into four units as follows:

Expenditure Unit - processes supplier, foster care maintenance and employee payroll and related expenses. The unit must ensure that payments have supporting documentation and are properly authorized. Payments must be correctly recorded so that financial reports provide accurate information for management and the Public Accounts.

Revenue and Program Support Unit - records all revenue received by the Department, provides financial services and support to the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Child Benefit Adjustment programs. The Unit also monitors all institutional trust accounts, manages the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan imprest account and the Family and Youth imprest account. It is also responsible for the development and monitoring of financial controls in the Department's expenditure systems.

Accounts Receivable Unit - responsible for the recovery and collection of all debts owed to the Department.

Community-Based Organization Payment Unit - maintains and monitors the application of financial and administrative policies and procedures for community-based organizations funded by the Department. Prepares the service agreements and processes payments to community-based organizations.

Update

The development of the annual budget strategy is complicated by changing program demands and shifting government and public expectations for Social Services' programs. Reshaping Departmental financial plans involves understanding and predicting program activities and examining program effectiveness while meeting government-wide planning objectives for social policies.

Recovery of overpayments from Saskatchewan Assistance Plan recipients who are no longer receiving benefits were $888,450 in fiscal year 2000-2001. Overpayments of assistance incurred by recipients still receiving Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefits are recovered from their benefits.

An Internal Audit Committee was established as planned in the 1999-2000 Annual Report. The Committee has reviewed the audit of the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement programs with the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan audit receiving acceptance from the Committee. Guidelines were developed to conduct an audit of the Family and Youth Automated Payment system. However, the financial audit was delayed until 2001-2002 to ensure it was properly integrated with other audits involving program considerations.

A project started in 1999-2000 to ensure that the Department was collecting all the revenue it was eligible to receive from the Government of Canada for the Children's Special Allowance was completed. However, the automation of a provincial application process for the children's special allowance was not implemented and the process remains manual. This initiative has been priorized for 2001-02.

In 2000-2001, the Department contacted the Government of Canada regarding recovery of Saskatchewan Assistance Plan overpayments from certain federal benefit programs. As other provincial government departments have become aware and are interested in this process, Saskatchewan Finance has now assumed the lead role in co-ordinating this process with the Federal government.

Key Trends

The increased emphasis on accountability and accounting and reporting standards affects not only the Department but also the community-based organizations which are funded by the Department. For community-based organizations, this presents a continuing challenge to balance the demands these accountability requirements place on the organization with the resources required to deliver services to the community.

The new automated benefit programs and payment systems implemented by the Department continue to challenge the Division to develop extensive internal system controls and effective internal audit resources and procedures to ensure the integrity of the system and the resulting expenditures.

Key Risks

The ability of the Division to meet the challenges provided by these trends will depend on its ability to recruit financial professionals as well as retain existing staff trained in the operation and maintenance of automated systems.

Plans for 2001-2002

The Financial Services Branch will continue to strengthen its internal audit capabilities. Plans are also underway to expand the scope of audit reviews.

A review of the financial reporting requirements for community-based organizations is planned. The purpose of the review is to seek opportunities to simplify the reports but still ensure accountability requirements are met. In conjunction with this review, the Division intends to enhance the support to community-based organizations on the technical areas of the financial reports.

Expenditure Statement 2000-2001

		1999-2000	2000-2001			
		Actual ($000's)	Approved Budget ($000's)	Actual ($000's)	Variance Actual to Actual ($000's)	*Notes*
SS01	**Administration**	**7,938**	**7,244**	**7,292**	**(646)**	1
SS02	**Accommodation & Central Services**					
	0057 Payments to SPMC	12,864	13,912	13,849	985	
	Total Accommodation & Central Services	**12,864**	**13,912**	**13,849**	**985**	2
SS03	**Income Support**					
	0004 Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	254,204	248,966	255,038	834	
	0008 Saskatchewan Income Plan	11,674	11,200	10,924	(750)	
	0012 Saskatchewan Child Benefit	63,671	52,121	46,804	(16,867)	
	0013 Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	10,308	15,200	11,541	1,233	
	0029 Income Security Administration	6,610	8,014	7,650	1,040	
	0033 Community-Based Income Security Programs	1,914	2,276	1,968	54	
	Total Income Support	**348,381**	**337,777**	**333,925**	**(14,456)**	3
SS04	**Family & Youth Services**					
	0005 Family & Youth Community Services	36,454	35,889	38,898	2,444	
	0010 Family & Youth CBO Services	17,707	19,067	18,302	595	
	0011 Family & Youth Administration	2,898	3,318	3,286	388	
	0056 Facilities for Children & Youth	26,247	27,271	29,898	3,651	
	Total Family & Youth Services	**83,306**	**85,545**	**90,384**	**7,078**	4
SS05	**Regional Service Centres**	**48,434**	**48,561**	**50,615**	**2,181**	5
SS06	**Community Living**					
	0024 Program Delivery	20,346	21,559	22,148	1,802	
	0027 Payments and Grants	38,483	41,908	42,115	3,632	
	Total Community Living	**58,829**	**63,467**	**64,263**	**5,434**	6
SS07	**Child Care**					
	0018 Child Care Facilities	5,463	6,785	6,482	1,019	
	0041 Child Care Parent Subsidies	9,863	10,269	9,850	(13)	
	0051 Child Care Administration	1,757	1,495	1,678	(79)	
	Total Child Care	**17,083**	**18,549**	**18,010**	**927**	7
SS09	**Office of Disability Issues**	**201**	**203**	**236**	**35**	
Total Social Services Expenditure		**577,036**	**575,258**	**578,574**	**1,538**	

(See following page for notes.)

Expenditure Statement 2000-2001

		1999-2000	2000-2001			
		Actual ($000's)	**Approved Budget ($000's)**	**Actual ($000's)**	**Variance Actual to Actual ($000's)**	***Notes***
SS01	**Administration**	**7,938**	**7,244**	**7,292**	**(646)**	*1.*
SS02	**Accommodation & Central Services**					
	0057 Payments to SPMC	12,864	13,912	13,849	985	
	Total Accommodation & Central Services	**12,864**	**13,912**	**13,849**	**985**	*2.*
SS03	**Income Support**					
	0004 Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	254,204	248,966	255,038	834	
	0008 Saskatchewan Income Plan	11,674	11,200	10,924	(750)	
	0012 Saskatchewan Child Benefit	63,671	52,121	46,804	(16,867)	
	0013 Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	10,308	15,200	11,541	1,233	
	0029 Income Security Administration	6,610	8,014	7,650	1,040	
	0033 Community-Based Income Security Programs	1,914	2,276	1,968	54	
	Total Income Support	**348,381**	**337,777**	**333,925**	**(14,456)**	*3.*
SS04	**Family & Youth Services**					
	0005 Family & Youth Community Services	36,454	35,889	38,898	2,444	
	0010 Family & Youth CBO Services	17,707	19,067	18,302	595	
	0011 Family & Youth Administration	2,898	3,318	3,286	388	
	0056 Facilities for Children & Youth	26,247	27,271	29,898	3,651	
	Total Family & Youth Services	**83,306**	**85,545**	**90,384**	**7,078**	*4.*
SS05	**Regional Service Centres**	**48,434**	**48,561**	**50,615**	**2,181**	*5.*
SS06	**Community Living**					
	0024 Program Delivery	20,346	21,559	22,148	1,802	
	0027 Payments and Grants	38,483	41,908	42,115	3,632	
	Total Community Living	**58,829**	**63,467**	**64,263**	**5,434**	*6.*
SS07	**Child Care**					
	0018 Child Care Facilities	5,463	6,785	6,482	1,019	
	0041 Child Care Parent Subsidies	9,863	10,269	9,850	(13)	
	0051 Child Care Administration	1,757	1,495	1,678	(79)	
	Total Child Care	**17,083**	**18,549**	**18,010**	**927**	*7.*
SS09	**Office of Disability Issues**	**201**	**203**	**236**	**35**	
Total Social Services Expenditure		**577,036**	**575,258**	**578,574**	**1,538**	

(See following page for notes.)

Notes

1. *Most Y2K expenditures occurred in 1999-2000 and were minimal in 2000-2001.*
2. *Increases in Department space and normal lease increases.*
3. *SAP increase due to utility rate increases and other inflationary costs. Lower SIP caseload due to higher incomes among seniors. SCB reduction due to offsetting federal investment in NCBS. SES caseload increase. Development of phase 2 of Income Security Redesign. Realignment of existing funding for mainframe processing to more accurately reflect where expenditures occurred. Increase in service delivery by community-based organizations primarily trusteeship services, child nutrition and northern initiatives.*
4. *Increased program activity in foster care, family support, and private treatment. Increased costs to develop services within the community. Administrative increase to support redesign of programs. Increased operating costs with facilities for children and youth.*
5. *April 1, 2000 Class Plan/Pay Equity unfunded, PST impact.*
6. *Class Plan and CUPE retro; one-time funding to respond to critical capital issues, over expenditure for Camp Thunderbird. CBO salary increases, new programs to respond to caseload pressures, transfer of programs formerly administered by Health.*
7. *Grant restructuring with rate increases, and implementation of the Community Solutions program.*

Revenue Statement 2000-2001

	1999-2000 Actual ($000's)	2000-2001 Actual ($000's)
Sales, Services and Service Fees		
- Miscellaneous Medical and Institutional Services	950	662
- Other Miscellaneous Services	54	52
- Miscellaneous Deductions from Staff Salaries	58	61
Total Sales, Services and Service Fees	**1,062**	**775**
Receipts from Government of Canada		
- Federal-Provincial cost sharing agreements	0	94
- Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons Agreement	3	0
- Employability Assistance	1,282	1,326
- Young Offenders Agreement	7,282	7,136
- Special Allowance for Children in Care	3,791	3,421
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	1,544	1,454
- Other Federal Contributions	38	0
Total Receipts from Government of Canada	**13,940**	**13,431**
Other Revenue		
- Maintenance Order Revenues	1,295	1,089
- Casual Revenue	113	9
- Unemployment Insurance Assignment Revenue	107	91
- Repayment — Public Assistance	969	756
- Refunds of Previous years' Expenditures	192	351
- Collection Agency Fees Withheld	(146)	(59)
Total Other Revenue	**2,530**	**2,237**
Total Social Services Revenue	**17,532**	**16,443**

Capital Assets

	Mar. 31, 2001			Mar. 31, 2000		
Property and Equipment	**Cost**	**Accumulated Amortization**	**Net Book Value**	**Cost**	**Accumulated Amortization**	**Net Book Value**
Vehicles	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Machinery and equipment	1,370,567	632,985	737,582	1,267,058	522,495	744,563
Computer hardware	1,179,504	582,902	596,602	865,769	360,099	505,670
Computer software	636,320	325,925	310,395	605,616	289,926	315,690
Office equipment	144,631	85,341	59,290	144,631	56,415	88,216
Office furniture	1,223,409	354,932	868,477	947,299	234,240	713,059
Total	**$4,554,431**	**$1,982,085**	**$2,572,346**	**$3,830,373**	**$1,463,175**	**$2,367,198**

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Office of Disability Issues

The Office of Disability Issues (ODI) was established in September 1998. It is hosted by the Department of Social Services and reports directly to the Deputy Minister of Social Services. The Minister of Social Services is also the Minister Responsible for Disability Issues. ODI serves as a focal point for provincial government initiatives on disability policy and performs a co-ordinating role throughout government in addressing disability issues and policies.

Functions

The functions of the Office of Disability Issues include leadership, co-ordination, research, policy development, education, communication, consultation, collaboration and negotiation of disability issues.

A key function is to ensure a co-ordinated and collaborative approach to disability policy. This approach is supported by a number of activities including:

- chairing the Interdepartmental Officials' Steering Committee on Disability Issues;
- participating in senior level interdepartmental committees;
- developing joint task teams with the disability community and government;
- representing Saskatchewan at national and interprovincial meetings; and
- participating in government reviews and policy/program development initiatives.

While the Office provides leadership in the development and co-ordination of policies, programs and services across government, it remains the responsibility of government departments and agencies to develop and deliver the services and programs required to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Objectives

Objectives of ODI are to:

- guide and facilitate the implementation of Saskatchewan's Disability Action Plan;
- develop and ensure the use of a disability inclusion lens to assess the impact on and improve the outcomes of policies, programs and legislation for persons with disabilities;
- partner with government departments and the community to direct the development of an integrated, co-ordinated array of public policies, programs and services for persons with disabilities;
- work with government departments and the disability community to identify and resolve issues of concern to the disability community; and
- collaborate with all levels of government and the community to implement the national vision for persons with disabilities.

Organization

ODI has a staff of four — an Executive Co-ordinator, a Research and Policy Analyst, a Research Officer and an Administrative Assistant. Actual expenditures were $236,326.

Update on 2000-2001 Activities

As a cross-government initiative the ODI has accomplished the following:

Disability Action Plan

ODI has worked closely with the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues to develop a direction for Saskatchewan's Disability Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies a vision statement and values, goals, priorities, outcomes and recommended future actions.

A joint community and government working group with representatives from ODI, the council, government departments and the Provincial Interagency Network on Disabilities (PIND) planned and conducted province-wide community forums on the Disability Action Plan process in May and June 2000. The purpose of the forums was to ensure that the proposed direction for the Disability Action Plan process developed by the council reflected the needs and desires of the disability community.

Two subcommittees were established to develop the community forums. One subcommittee was responsible for the design and implementation of the province-wide community forums. The other subcommittee was responsible for preparing a workbook that was sent in April 2000 to over 1,200 organizations and individuals. The workbook was used as a basis for discussion at the community forums. The office had the lead role for both the design and writing committees.

Over 24 community forums were held in 11 locations throughout the province (Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Estevan, Wilkie, North Battleford, Melfort, La Ronge). Feedback from all participants was recorded for inclusion in the Disability Action Plan. The council writing team completed the Disability Action Plan document in spring 2001.

Disability Inclusion Lens

The Disability Inclusion Lens (DIL) is a policy tool to assist government in assessing the impact of policies, programs and legislation on persons with disabilities. The lens will help to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities will be considered and incorporated into the initial planning and ongoing development of government initiatives.

A joint community and government working group was established in April 1999 to develop the DIL. The DIL working group includes representatives from the Office of Disability Issues, the Officials' Steering Committee on Disability Issues, PIND and the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues. A draft of the Disability Inclusion Lens will be completed in the fall of 2001.

Disability Supports Reference Group/Working Group

In December 2000 ODI and the Department of Social Services established a Disability Supports Reference Group to provide input and advice for further research, analysis and options for income support for persons with disabilities. The reference group will identify key directions and research, develop and explore preliminary policy and program options on income support and attachment to the labour market for persons with disabilities. The goal of the reference group is to provide input to income support options designed to promote independent living; economic self-sufficiency; reduced dependence on social assistance; greater participation in the labour force; and an improved quality of life for people with disabilities. Some members of the reference group are also members of the Disability Supports Working Group.

Autism Task Team

ODI continues to co-ordinate a joint community/government task team to examine options for improving access and availability for services to individuals with autism and their families. In winter 2001, as part of the Autism Task Team, ODI assisted in the preparation of an initial report for the Departments of Health, Social Services and Education on program and policy relating to early intervention and respite.

Other Activities

ODI participated in reviews and program development initiatives including the Saskatchewan Social Services Income Security Redesign Working Group, Self-Managed Care, the Legislative Working Committee regarding amendments to *The Dependent Adults Act* and *The Public Trustee Act*, and the Provincial FAS Co-ordinating Committee. The Office is a member of the Human Services Integration Forum.

ODI and the Income Security Division of Social Services have been involved in a joint research project since January 2001 to determine how interventions for persons with disabilities can most effectively be delivered outside of the current SAP system to enable them to obtain and sustain attachment to the labour force. Prairie Research Associates will be conducting the research.

ODI has been invited by Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training to participate in evaluating community based proposals focusing on employment services for persons with disabilities.

Plans for 2001 - 2002

- Present the Disability Action Plan to the Minister Responsible for Disability Issues in spring 2001.
- Complete a draft Disability Inclusion Lens by fall 2001 and develop an implementation plan by January 2002.
- Continue work with the Disability Supports Reference Group and Working Group to co-ordinate the development of a larger disability policy framework.
- Work with an advisory committee focusing on the prevention of disabilities acquired through accidents. The committee is an initiative of the Saskatchewan Institute on the Prevention of Handicaps, Smart Risk and the Acquired Brain Injury Program.

Index

accountability *(Income Security Programs)*, 15
adoption, 37
alternative measures *(young offenders)*, 41, 54, 58, 61

Building Independence, 9

Capital assets, 87
Child Day Care, 16
Child Nutrition and Development Program, 14
child protection, 33
child welfare
  new directions (re-design), 33
children in care, 34
community-based organizations, 50, 53, 57, 63
Community Development Unit, 76
Community Living Divison, 25

Disability Action Plan, 88

early childhood development strategy *(Child Day Care)*, 18
early childhood intervention, 28
early childhood services grants *(Child Day Care)*, 17
emergency social services, 15
expenditure statement, 84
First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies, 31, 48, 53, 54, 57, 63
forest fires, 55
foster care, 35

group homes, 35

Income Security Division, 8
  client barriers survey, 24
  Internet web site *(Department)*, 22
  program accountability, 15
  public opinion poll, 23
  re-design, 9
information technology, 79
Integrated School-Linked Program, 55

northern community initiatives, 51, 54

Office of Disability Issues, 88

parenting education, 32
Prevention and Support Grants, 32

regions
  caseload activity, 68
residential private treatment, 35
revenue statement, 86

Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, 11
  environmental factors, 13
Saskatchewan Child Benefit, 10
Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, 11, 69
Saskatchewan Income Plan, 13
sexual exploitation of children and youth through prostitution, 39
sixteen and seventeen year olds, 38
Social Services website, 22
Strategic Plan, 7

Teen and Young Parent Program, 32

Valley View Centre, 28

young offender services, 41
  community-based services, 41, 49, 54
  custody options, 43, 50
  wilderness camp, 58
Youth In and From Care and Custody Network, 36
Youth Justice Forum (Regina), 66